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United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1998

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Note

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Chapter I
Introduction

1. There was relative stability in 1998 in terms of the global numbers of refugees and persons of concern to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). By the end of the year, the global figure stood at 21.4 million, as compared to 22.4 the previous year. Close to half of this number (11.4 million) were refugees, while the remainder comprised internally displaced persons, returnees, asylum-seekers and stateless people. As can be seen in table 3 at the end of the present report, the vast majority of refugees and persons of concern to UNHCR were to be found in Africa, Asia and Europe.

2. Unlike events of some earlier years in the decade, there were no massive refugee movements in 1998 nor in the early months of 1999. In the period covered by the present report, UNHCR was nevertheless confronted with a cascade of emergencies that were relatively small in size and visibility, but no less traumatic for the refugees and displaced persons concerned. This pattern changed dramatically in the very last week of March 1999, with the beginning of the massive emergency in the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.[1] These emergencies were graphic examples of the close relationship between armed conflict, human rights abuses and the ensuing exodus of refugee. Movements in and across borders were particularly alarming in Africa. In West Africa, the crises in Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau forced hundreds of thousands to flee their homes. The resurgence of fighting in the Democratic Republic of the Congo not only provoked new movements of refugees and displaced persons, but also made it extremely hazardous for UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations to continue with their operations. As 1998 drew to a close, the armed conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia led to a new spate of displacement and mass expulsions in the Horn of Africa.

3. Voluntary repatriation, the preferred solution in the vast majority of refugee situations, was of limited scope in 1998. Although on a relatively modest scale, successful results were achieved in a number of situations: Ethiopian refugees were able to return from the Sudan; refugees returned from Ethiopia to north-west Somalia, indicating the return of some degree of peace and stability to certain parts of the Horn of Africa. In West Africa, the repatriation of Tuareg refugees to Mali and Niger was completed, while sizeable numbers of Liberians went back to their homeland, either spontaneously or with UNHCR assistance. In Central America, the long-standing Guatemalan refugee problem moved towards a successful conclusion, owing to a combination of voluntary repatriation and local integration in Mexico.

4. In other situations, however, continued violence or a failure of political negotiations disrupted plans for a return, leading, in extreme cases, to renewed outflows. This was notably the case in Angola, where implementation of the Lusaka Peace Accords suffered serious setbacks. Renewed hostilities led to a new outflow and generated even larger numbers of internally displaced people. Armed conflict in the southern Sudan ruled out plans for the repatriation of refugees from Ethiopia and Uganda; Somali refugees in Kenya were likewise unable to go back to their country of origin; Sahrawi refugees continued to live in exile, waiting for a successful conclusion to negotiations on Western Sahara; refugees from Burundi had to remain in the United Republic of Tanzania, where their presence was a major source of tension between the two States. The repatriation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran was also impeded by the gravely insecure situation in Afghanistan. Repatriation to Sri Lanka proved impossible as a result of the intensity of conflict in the country, which has left hundreds of thousands of Tamil refugees still in India.

5. The challenges posed to UNHCR by these stalemate situations have been compounded by the fact that the victims of armed conflict and human rights abuses have found it increasingly difficult to find safe refuge in neighbouring States or in countries further afield. Potential countries of asylum in both the developing and industrialized world have demonstrated a growing reluctance to respect the basic principles of refugee protection, while the world's poorer countries have argued that they are being expected to bear too great a responsibility, for too long, for the world's refugees.

6. In response, UNHCR has intensified activities under its protection mandate, giving prominence to those of an advocacy and promotional nature, such as the global campaign to promote States' accession to international instruments for the protection of refugees and the conventions on statelessness. It has also taken steps to ensure a more integrated approach to all its programmes, associating protection more closely with assistance in terms of strategies, objectives and assessment of outputs.

7. Wide-ranging consultations have taken place with other international players at all levels. In particular, UNHCR has sought to encourage regional initiatives such as the Regional Meeting on Refugee Issues in the Great Lakes, convened at ministerial level in Kampala by UNHCR and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in May 1998. In Europe, there has been follow-up to the Commonwealth

of Independent States (CIS) Conference, while in Asia ties with the Asia-Pacific consultations have been strengthened.

8. Another important initiative has concerned efforts to engage in a more intensive dialogue with international development and financial actors on the "reintegration gap" as well as the broader issue of post-conflict reconstruction. The goal is to ensure a smoother transition from relief to development in situations of fragile peace and economic devastation to which refugees so frequently return. A landmark in this process was a round table in the first week of 1999, convened at the Brookings Institution in Washington by UNHCR in association with the World Bank. This issue was also the subject of consultations in the context of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

9. Lastly, in an effort to strengthen its own capacity to respond to the many challenges described in the pages of this report, UNHCR has also pursued a number of change management initiatives, some of them with far-reaching implications in terms of new processes and technology. It has also undergone a major restructuring at the Headquarters level in the early months of 1999.

10. In 1998, UNHCR received a total of some US$ 769 million in voluntary contributions towards its General and Special Programmes. These are listed in Table 2 to the present report. By 31 March 1999, a total of nearly US$ 249 million had been received against General and Special Programmes requirements, amounting to some US$ 914.8 million.

Chapter II
International protection

A. Introduction

11. The primary functions of UNHCR are to provide international protection to refugees and to seek permanent solutions to their problems by assisting Governments to facilitate their voluntary repatriation, or their assimilation within new national communities. The legal basis for these functions is provided by the Statute of the Office (General Assembly resolution 428 (V) annex of 14 December 1950), which defines the work of the High Commissioner as entirely non-political, humanitarian and social. The activities of the Office are further reinforced and guided by subsequent General Assembly resolutions, conclusions and decisions of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, and are carried out in a framework comprising international refugee, human rights and humanitarian law and internationally accepted standards for the treatment of refugees.

12. International protection means first of all securing respect for the basic rights of refugees, including admission to safety and non-refoulement, as well as ensuring that refugees are accorded favourable treatment in countries of asylum. It also means promoting ratification of the relevant international instruments with States and incorporation of these instruments into their national legislation.

13. The securing of basic rights of refugees is the responsibility of States, which have an obligation to ensure that refugees' right to security of their persons is respected. In this regard, States need to ensure the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps located in their territory, which includes locating camps away from border areas, disarming and removing militant elements from the camps and not exploiting refugees for political ends. Departure from these basic tenets undermine the very nature of the peaceful grant of asylum and render it a threat to the country of origin, to the country of refuge and to the refugees themselves.

14. A note on international protection presented at the forty-ninth session of the Executive Committee last year touched on the above issues and reviewed developments in refugee protection during the previous year. In recognition of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the overall theme of the note focused on interlinkages between refugee protection and human rights. The note also drew attention to the fact that the entire refugee experience, from forcible displacement, through the search for asylum, to the securing of durable solutions, illustrates the continuing gap between the theory and the practice of respect for human rights principles.

15. The note examined the experience of refugee protection under four broad rubrics: the causes of refugee flows; the right to seek and enjoy asylum; standards of treatment for refugees and asylum-seekers; and the right to return. It acknowledged the inherent complementarity between the refugee-specific mandate of UNHCR and the broader human rights mandates of other concerned agencies and institutions and asserted the need to maintain the mutually supportive but separate character of their respective mandates. The note stressed that while the challenge of closing the gap between theory and practice required concerted action from all concerned parties, including States, the United Nations and other international, regional and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community groups, the success of this effort will ultimately depend on the political will of States.

16. Given the international scope and nature of issues relating to refugees, their protection and solutions to their situation cannot be achieved without international cooperation. In this connection, the forty-ninth session of the Executive Committee adopted as its annual theme "International solidarity and burden-sharing in all its aspects: national, regional, and international responsibilities for refugees". This theme underscored the need for resources to be mobilized to assist countries receiving refugees, particularly developing countries, which host the majority of the world's refugees. The theme drew attention to the need for burden-sharing to be understood in its broadest sense and not merely in financial terms. It highlighted the fact that the granting of asylum should not, however, be dependent on burden-sharing arrangements first being in place.

B. Protection activities

17. Thousands of asylum-seekers have been admitted and given refuge in many parts of the world and durable solutions have been found for thousands of refugees. UNHCR was actively engaged in monitoring the well-being of returnees in many countries of return, as well as in projects which facilitate the reintegration of returnees. UNHCR's experience has been that, in order to ensure the sustainability of return, returnees must become part of a wider integration process, which should include national institution- and capacity-building, particularly in countries emerging from conflict.

18. UNHCR's international protection mandate continued to be challenged on many fronts during the reporting period, with some States failing to abide by the basic tenets of refugee protection, including through violations of the principle of non-refoulement and a reluctance to accord to asylum-seekers and refugees humane treatment according to international standards. The Office also remained preoccupied with the protection of thousands of refugees fleeing from armed conflict. The conflicts in Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Sierra Leone continued not only to generate mass outflows, but also to renew the cycles of hatred and violence that impede the search for political resolutions and durable solutions for those displaced. Flagrant and grave violations of international humanitarian law was a regular feature in all these conflicts. In this atmosphere, UNHCR's capacity to fulfil its protection responsibilities was severely constrained by the lack of cooperation by States to abide by the basic tenets of refugee protection, the failure of States to respect or enforce the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and difficulties in obtaining access to refugees. There were instances, for example, in the Central African Republic and in the Republic of the Congo, where refugees in camps were attacked or recruited for participation in armed hostilities and hundreds of Sierra Leonean refugees and displaced persons continued to be victims of appalling attacks and mutilation. Concerns for the safety and security of staff also affected the scope and effectiveness of international protection activities. Increasingly, UNHCR staff and other humanitarian personnel were faced with threats and physical attack, sometimes resulting in injury and death. This underscored all the more the obligation of States to facilitate the discharge of UNHCR's mandated functions.

19. There is a renewed global interest in issues relating to exclusion from refugee status, not least because internal conflicts are being conducted in flagrant disregard of international human rights and humanitarian law, and because both persecutors and their victims are often forced by events to seek refuge together. Exclusion issues are also gaining a higher profile in the context of the fight against international terrorism in all its forms, as well as within the framework of the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. UNHCR issued internal guidelines on the application of the exclusion clauses and on the exclusion of Rwandan asylum-seekers in 1996. This was followed by a note on the exclusion clauses, submitted to the Standing Committee of the Executive Committee in June 1997, and by an oral report on exclusion presented to the twelfth meeting of the Standing Committee in June 1998.

20. The detention of refugees and asylum-seekers in a number of countries continued to be a matter of serious concern to UNHCR. In accordance with UNHCR's "Guidelines on Detention", which state UNHCR's position on this important issue, interventions were undertaken by the Office with various Governments on the subject of unjustified detention of refugees. It was decided at the fourth informal consultations with Governments, held at Geneva on 4 and 5 December 1997, that UNHCR would update its "Guidelines on Detention" to take into account more recent legal developments in this field. Accordingly, UNHCR issued new "guidelines on detention" in February 1999. These guidelines emphasize that confinement of asylum-seekers and refugees is inherently undesirable and encourage States to explore alternatives to detention.

21. The composite nature of population movements has emerged as one of the problematic features of current trends. The subject is broad-ranging and extends into the broader

field of international migration, but has very important refugee aspects. Issues in this connection were discussed in the conference room paper entitled "Composite flows and the relationship to refugee outflows, including return of persons not in need of international protection, as well as facilitation of return in its global dimension", presented to the twelfth meeting of the Standing Committee. The paper focused on a discussion of the situation of refugees within mixed flows, the return of those not in need of international protection and the facilitation of return through readmission agreements. It called for States to adopt comprehensive measures to avert refugee flows, including through measures aimed at accelerating economic and social development, enhancing the rule of law and ensuring respect for human rights. The paper urged States to pursue humane modalities for the return of persons not in need of international protection and to further develop the concept of State responsibility as it relates to redressing the root causes of mass outflows.

22. During the reporting period, UNHCR was actively engaged in various activities relating to nationality and statelessness issues, including promoting accession to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. UNHCR provided technical and advisory services on nationality laws and their implementation to numerous States globally, with particular emphasis placed on resolving nationality issues in Central/Eastern Europe and the former Yugoslavia.

23. Following UNHCR's active participation in the drafting of the 1997 European Convention on Nationality, the Office continued its cooperation with the Council of Europe's Nationality Committee through the drafting of a recommendation on the prevention and reduction of statelessness. A number of training workshops on nationality and statelessness were held for UNHCR staff, government officials, NGOs and other concerned organizations. UNHCR also issued a number of publications in this area, including: "Guidelines: field office activities concerning statelessness; a revised "Information and accession package: the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness"; and an information brochure on the problem of statelessness.

24. UNHCR continued to play a role in protection, assistance and solutions for internally displaced persons in such places as Bosnia and Herzegovina, the northern Caucasus region and Sri Lanka. New protection challenges with respect to internally displaced were posed by internal conflicts in Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone. UNHCR's work in this field is guided by a comprehensive approach encompassing international protection, assistance and, where possible, solutions. As part of this approach, efforts have been made to ensure that humanitarian action on behalf of internally displaced persons in no way restricts their right to seek and enjoy asylum. UNHCR has also stressed the importance of inter-agency approaches and has fully supported the efforts of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Representative of the Secretary-General for Internally Displaced Persons. During the reporting period, UNHCR disseminated the "Guiding principles on internal displacement" to all its field offices and incorporated them in its training programmes.

25. During the reporting period, UNHCR sought to ensure full implementation of existing guidelines relating to the protection of refugee women. Training of staff in this area was intensified and pilot projects in the field were initiated. One such project has been established in five sub-Saharan African countries to prevent and respond to sexual violence. The project envisages a multi-sectoral approach under which all UNHCR staff will assume appropriate responsibilities to address protection concerns facing women. The revised format for the annual protection report by UNHCR, a field-based reporting mechanism, also encourages a thorough review of the impact of various programmes on the protection of refugee women. Protection monitoring indicators for such impact reviews have been drafted. UNHCR also continues to promote the legal protection of refugee women through principled interpretation of the refugee definition. Activities during the reporting period included interventions in various judicial fora in cases involving gender-related persecution claims, as well as representations on the subject matter in a number of conferences.

26. UNHCR's work on behalf of refugee children has most recently benefited from a strengthening of the Office's training capacity in this area. During the reporting period, priority was given to training activities related to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as this instrument is regarded by UNHCR as the key protection tool for refugee children. In this context, and under the Action for the Rights of Children project, 13 training modules were drafted and four regional workshops were organized with a view to identify critical child-related issues in specific geographical regions. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the fundamental framework of all the modules. UNHCR continued to support projects which placed special emphasis on the protection of refugee children. An example is the

Liberian Children Initiative, a joint UNHCR/UNICEF rights-based project that aims to address the specific protection issues facing children and adolescents, including the recruitment of refugee/returnee minors for activities related to armed conflict.

C. Promotion

27. In October 1998, UNHCR launched a two-year global campaign to promote States accession to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Statelessness Persons, and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. During the reporting period, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan acceded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, bringing the number of States party to one or both instruments to 138.

28. Through its promotional activities, UNHCR sought to raise public awareness and to strengthen knowledge and understanding of refugee issues within the broader context of forced displacement in its different forms. These activities were directed at fostering the effective implementation of international legal standards on behalf of refugees, returnees and other persons of concern to UNHCR. Activities were undertaken to identify and strengthen the linkages between refugee law, human rights law and international humanitarian law so that each could be better used for the protection of refugees and others of concern to UNHCR. These activities also aimed at promoting the incorporation of relevant international legal standards into national legislation and administrative procedures. During the reporting period, UNHCR increased its promotional activities at the regional level. To this end, the Office participated in various seminars and conferences on refugees and related issues and organized refugee law and protection courses for government officials, judges, implementing partners, military and peacekeeping forces, academic institutions and NGOs in all regions of the world.

29. UNHCR continued to strengthen its relationship with different international, regional and national human rights bodies, including national human rights commissions and ombudsmen. The Office closely monitored the work of the Commission on Human Rights and the various experts and groups reporting to it. It monitored the United Nations Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities and the work of the six United Nations treaty bodies to ensure that issues of relevance to the work of UNHCR were brought to the attention of these bodies. UNHCR also continued to strengthen its monitoring of and collaboration with the human rights components of regional bodies, such as the Council of Europe, the European Court of Human Rights, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee to reinforce the understanding of refugee protection in these different bodies.

Chapter III
Operational activities

A. Major trends in operations

1. General and Special Programmes

30. UNHCR differentiates between two types of operational activities: those covered by General Programmes (including the Programme Reserve, the Voluntary Repatriation Fund, and the Emergency Fund) and Special Programmes, funded through appeals launched under the United Nations Secretary-General or through consolidated, inter-agency appeals. In 1998, General Programmes expenditure reached a total of over US$ 348 million, which was $91 million (or 21 per cent) less than the approved target, following a programme/budgetary review undertaken during the course of 1998. All geographical regions, as well as headquarters, were obliged to limit expenditure and to adjust activities under General Programmes to the projected level of income.

31. The budget exercise in mid-1998, also resulted in a revised budget of $551.5 million for Special Programmes in 1998. Total project expenditure for the year amounted to some $492.1 million, of which a breakdown by region and by type of assistance is provided in table 1 to the present report. Total income for the Special Programmes amounted to $489.5 million. Taking into account unobligated funds brought forward from 1997 of $127.2 million, UNHCR was able to carry over some $138.1 million into 1999.

32. In October 1998, the Executive Committee approved a General Programme target of $413 million for 1999. Projections for 1999 under the Special Programmes currently amount to $482 million, of which some $168 million pertain to operations in the former Yugoslavia and neighbouring countries. Global projected needs in 1999 total $914.8 million, of which $19.8 million will be met from the regular budget.

2. Types of assistance

33. This section describes major features and trends of UNHCR's programmes, by type of assistance. More detailed descriptions by region are to be found in sections D through H below.

(a) Emergency preparedness, response and assistance

34. The limited staff resources of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Section (EPRS) are complemented by an emergency roster of some 30 additional UNHCR staff. In 1998 and during the first quarter of 1999, some 30 Emergency Response Team (ERT) missions were dispatched to operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Guinea, Liberia, Cambodia, Thailand, the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, other parts of the former Yugoslavia, Albania and Nicaragua.

35. UNHCR's emergency roster is further reinforced by standby arrangements with the Norwegian and Danish Refugee Councils, Radda Barnen, the United Nations Volunteers Programme, the non-governmental organization Red R (Australia) (for engineers) and the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta (for health staff). Similar agreements also exist with the Russian emergency logistics agency (EMERCOM) and with the Swedish Rescue Services Association.

36. Contingency planning/situational preparedness is an essential element of emergency preparedness. During the reporting period, staff from EPRS facilitated such processes in 12 countries: Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Senegal, Kenya, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea.

37. Another important element of emergency preparedness is training. In 1998, an advanced Emergency Management Seminar (AEMS) was organized on a pilot basis, bringing together experienced staff both from UNHCR and partner agencies to reflect on current issues relating to international emergency management policies and to identify means of improving the response to emergency needs of refugees and other displaced populations. Under the regular Emergency Management Training Programme (EMTP) that involves staff of UNHCR as well as NGOs and governmental partners, a workshop took place in South Africa and another in Beijing, for countries of the Asia/Pacific region. A country-specific EMTP was organized in Malaysia, also covering Singapore. In addition, training for staff on the emergency roster has been offered through Workshops for Emergency Managers, combining basic management training with some practical, hands-on exercises in preparation for deployment to emergency/repatriation operations. As staff are on standby on the emergency roster for six months, there are two such workshops annually. The first, in 1999, has been organized with the support of the Swiss Civil Defence. In 1998, a second Workshop for Emergency Management at Headquarters was conducted for the benefit of Headquarters-based staff likely to be involved in emergencies. It was specifically designed to help enhance arrangements for information sharing and other mechanisms required by the exceptional circumstances of an emergency.

(b) Care and maintenance

38. Care and maintenance programmes provide essential basic services to refugee populations worldwide pending implementation of more durable solutions. In 1998, some $206.4 million (59 per cent of UNHCR's General Programmes) were spent on these types of programmes. Care and maintenance programmes include the provision of food for populations not covered by the World Food Programme; household goods and cooking/heating materials; shelter; construction and maintenance of drinking water sources; the management of human and solid waste, as well as vector/pest control activities; funds for the construction and operations of general health services and educational facilities, such as health posts, hospitals, nutrition centres, primary schools and vocational training centres; and, occasionally, support for economic activities through small-business assistance grants and loans. These types of programmes also provide legal assistance to refugees, for instance registration, legal representation, tracing and provision of identity documents. UNHCR's care and maintenance programmes are generally implemented by government agencies and/or NGOs that receive administrative support costs from UNHCR's budget.

39. In 1998, UNHCR implemented most of its care and maintenance programmes in the following regions: Africa (Ethiopia, Great Lakes region of Africa, Kenya and Guinea), Central Asia (Central Asian Republics and Pakistan), and the Balkans (former Yugoslavia, including the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). This trend is likely to continue in 1999.

(c) Voluntary repatriation

40. Although on a lesser scale than initially planned, a number of voluntary repatriation movements took place in 1998. The most significant, despite the precarious circumstances, were movements in West Africa, notably to Liberia. Repatriation and reintegration programmes were also implemented for the benefit of refugees returning to

Afghanistan and to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The return of Tuareg refugees to Mali and Niger was completed. With the improvement of the situation in north-west Somalia, a number of refugees were able to return from Ethiopia. In central America, the return to Guatemala of a small outstanding caseload from Mexico brought this chapter to a successful close. In global figures, close to 950,000 refugees repatriated in 1998, of whom over 400,000 were assisted by UNHCR.

41. In a number of other cases, however, ongoing or renewed conflict impeded plans for a voluntary return. This was notably the case in Angola, where UNHCR was forced to cease its repatriation efforts. Plans for the repatriation of Sudanese refugees from Ethiopia and Uganda were also disrupted by the armed conflict in southern Sudan, while the border conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea has deterred Eritrean refugees in the Sudan from repatriating.

42. Despite these setbacks, voluntary repatriation remains the preferred solution in the majority of refugee situations and is thus a priority for UNHCR, supported by the international community. It is hoped that in 1999 the final obstacles for a referendum in Western Sahara will be overcome and the repatriation process can start. Similarly, progress is anticipated with respect to the repatriation of Afghan refugees still residing in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. In Africa, political solutions to the armed conflicts in Angola, the Congo and Sierra Leone would also enable the resumption of repatriation operations and the return of internally displaced populations.

43. In 1998, UNHCR spent over $253 million on repatriation and reintegration programmes. For 1999, the required budget for these activities is estimated at some $170 million.

(d) Local settlement

44. The opportunities for local settlement continued to be very limited throughout 1998. The significant, ongoing programme in northern Uganda, however, received renewed impetus when the Government of Uganda and UNHCR announced new strategies in July 1998 for the integration of approximately 145,000 Sudanese refugees in local settlements in north-western Uganda's three districts of Arua, Moyo and Adjumani. The Government of Uganda and UNHCR representatives met with local communities (where refugees are settled), donors, the World Bank, United Nations agencies and NGOs, to discuss self-sufficiency strategies and programmes which were developed during the last months of the year. Uganda has a Sudanese refugee population of more than 170,000. Under the project, refugees, many of them are already settled on government-allocated plots of land, will be provided educational opportunities and vocational skills training. The UNHCR project is scheduled to run from 1999 to 2002.

45. Other local settlement programmes in Africa are being implemented in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Zambia. The main obstacle to rural settlement continues to be the unwillingness of Governments to provide sufficient land because of the growing pressure on land and resources in many countries. Self-reliance activities were also ongoing throughout the year in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

46. The UNHCR framework and manual on self-reliance, launched in 1997, represented an important step towards achieving a consistent self-reliance strategy limited to the implementation of local settlement programmes.

(e) Resettlement

47. As an important element of refugee protection and the attainment of durable solutions, resettlement continues to help ensure individual physical safety, while reinforcing asylum in host countries. In 1998, 26,600 refugees were resettled under UNHCR auspices. Submissions for another 13,300 persons were awaiting decision. A further 1,300 cases (some 4,000 persons) have been identified for submission or resubmission by UNHCR for resettlement. These figures do not include many thousands of refugees who qualify under specific resettlement and family reunification programmes, which often run parallel to refugee resettlement activities initiated by UNHCR.

48. Most resettlement cases under UNHCR auspices were from Africa, the Middle East and the former Yugoslavia, with African refugees comprising 41 per cent of the resettled refugees, compared to 34 per cent in 1997. The trend in broadening and diversifying access to resettlement opportunities among African refugees continued in 1998. As regards other regions, one third of those resettled were from the Middle East and one fifth were from the former Yugoslavia, as in 1997. In addition, several thousand refugees from the former Yugoslavia were resettled under direct processing arrangements by countries of resettlement. As recommended by the Executive Committee, UNHCR is also encouraging other countries to broaden the base of resettlement possibilities, using a trust fund which was established in 1997. There was an increase in the number of emergency resettlement cases processed in 1998 and more countries were urged to adopt emergency procedures. The Executive Committee also encouraged more concerted action on behalf of cases with special needs, including women

at-risk, refugee children and adolescents, refugees with medical needs and survivors of violence and torture, as well as elderly refugees.

49. The year 1998 was also marked by regular consultations among UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Governments and NGOs. The informal Working Group on Resettlement continued to serve as a forum for exchanging information on a variety of thematic and operational issues. A series of regional resettlement workshops were convened by UNHCR in Africa, South Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. Measures to enhance resettlement operations in the field also included training, dissemination of the "Resettlement Handbook" and reinforced staffing under a secondments project with NGOs. In addition, UNHCR undertook to overhaul its procedures for processing and submitting cases: the Electronic Resettlement Information and Submissions System (ERISS) is currently being finalized for dissemination to field offices.

B. Programme themes and priorities

1. Refugee women

50. UNHCR has continued to promote activities under its commitments to the Beijing Platform for Action and to promote gender equality for refugees as a goal. This approach makes gender analysis an integral part of programming, using the social context of refugee communities as basis for activities aimed to redress inequality and discrimination. Promoting human rights and equality of women is of particular relevance in refugee and emergency situations where they tend to be overshadowed by more immediate, life-saving objectives. Arrangements for implementing programmes may also affect discrimination in refugee communities, reinforcing or redressing gender inequality. While the approaches adopted to help ensure that refugee women and girls benefit from equal access to protection and assistance may vary from region to region, the objectives are shared. Mainstreaming a gender perspective has also become an integral part of the formulation of country programme objectives.

51. As explained in an earlier section of the present report, a number of actions have been taken in support of UNHCR's guidelines relating to the protection of refugee women. In this context, action to combat violence against refugee women has followed a two-pronged approach. This has comprised both prevention through information, education and communication (IEC) campaigns targeting refugee leaders, community/religious leaders and humanitarian aid workers, and assistance to victims of violence through protection, social, medical and legal measures.

52. It is generally recognized that the participation of women is central to promoting a culture of peace. UNHCR has thus been a lead participant in inter-agency workshops on women in conflict prevention and peace-building in Africa, the Americas and the Caucuses. The objectives of these activities are to build the capacity of women to contribute to preventing conflict, capacity-building for local NGOs, promoting and developing a culture of peace, involving civil society in changes to laws and linking up international women's groups that promote peace.

53. Efforts have also continued, with some success, to encourage asylum countries to recognize gender-based persecution as a grounds for claiming asylum and to ensure that asylum procedures are sufficiently gender sensitive. Other activities have included training women parliamentarians, and action in support of equal land rights for women, new legislation with respect to women asylum-seekers and ensuring equal access to documentation.

2. Refugee children and adolescents

54. As follow-up to the recommendations of the United Nations study on the impact of armed conflict on children (Graça Machel study), UNHCR presented a progress report to the thirteenth meeting of the Standing Committee in August 1998. The report gives details of 54 plans of action for war-affected children, initiated as a result of the recommendations of the Graça Machel study. As of February 1999, a total of 75 countries had submitted plans of action, many of them with follow-up reports.

55. The trust fund set up in 1997 to jump-start child rights and youth programmes in various regions continues to be implemented, with a number of new activities initiated in 1998. The Action for the Rights of Children programme is expanding: four regional workshops and one training of trainers workshop were held in 1998 and a total of 13 training modules on various child-related issues have been finalized. This programme has been realized in close collaboration with the International Save the Children Alliance.

56. A regional workshop on child-related issues also took place in Belgrade in February 1999 using materials from the Action for the Rights of Children programme. Participants included field staff from UNHCR, UNICEF and main implementing partners working with children in the region.

57. As partnerships with NGOs are critical to providing "on-the-spot" protection to war-affected girls and boys, the International Save the Children Alliance and UNHCR have

embarked on new capacity-building initiatives in West Africa, the Horn of Africa and Europe. In Africa, the aim is to assist NGOs in addressing the needs of war-affected children and young people. In Europe it is to promote a common set of best practices for separated children and to mobilize an non-governmental organization network to work on their behalf. UNHCR's support to the "Separated Children Across Europe" programme is important in this respect.

58. Collaboration with UNICEF is equally essential. In Liberia, the two agencies are jointly implementing the Liberian Children's Initiative, designed to address the particular reintegration needs of refugee and returnee children and youth in the main areas of return.

59. UNHCR provides support to the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict, and is a member of his advisory group. In particular, UNHCR is actively involved in the planning of the Special Representative's proposed Neighbourhood Initiatives, currently planned to take place in West Africa and the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Office continues to work closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

60. In 1998, a generous contribution of over $4 million funded activities for at-risk children in four regions. Programmes to support unaccompanied children, promote girls' education and offer informal education to adolescents were among those funded by this contribution.

3. Environment

61. *The Environmental Guidelines* promulgated by UNHCR continue to be the principal policy framework for integrating environmental issues into UNHCR activities. In 1998, UNHCR placed a renewed emphasis on how the guidelines can be implemented in field operations. This effort is continuing in 1999.

62. A number of large, integrated environmental projects have continued in several countries, including Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. Additional projects are beginning in Pakistan and Afghanistan. They include activities such as environmental planning, use of the geographical information system (GIS), the global positioning system (GPS) and satellite images in environmental assessment and monitoring, demarcation of protected areas, guided firewood harvesting, promotion of energy-efficient cooking devices and practices, erosion control, tree planting, agroforestry, and environmental education and awareness raising. Model projects were started in Djibouti (gender and environment), Zimbabwe (soil and agroforestry conservation) and Rwanda (paper poles for shelter construction). An evaluation of domestic energy devices used in refugee operations also took place during the year.

63. Efforts to increase awareness of environmental issues within UNHCR have continued. Having identified best practices in environmental management within refugee operations during 1997 and 1998, UNHCR has begun regional environmental management training courses for UNHCR and implementing partner staff. Two booklets summarizing key principles in environmental management and selected lessons learned have been developed for senior decision-makers and field managers. A training manual and a training video have also been produced. The first training workshop was held for staff in the Horn of Africa. The second will be organized for staff in South Asia. Others will follow later in 1999.

64. To improve support to field programmes, appropriate methodologies for environmental assessments related to refugee operations are being refined. The use of tools, such as environmental indicators, checklists, impact matrices, GIS, GPS and satellite images, will also be explored.

65. UNHCR regularly liaises with important partners on environmental issues, within the United Nations system (the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development), with host and donor Governments and with NGOs.

4. Refugee/returnee aid and development

66. A round table on the theme of "The Gap between Humanitarian Assistance and Long-Term Development" was convened by the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. It was co-sponsored by UNHCR and the World Bank and specifically addressed the gap in post-conflict situations, when development agencies are not yet operational, while humanitarian agencies are increasingly requested to phase out at an early stage. The work of the round table is being followed-up by a small representative action group. It is reviewing institutional arrangements for ensuring a better transition from humanitarian assistance to long-term development in post-conflict societies, as well as "ways to ensure more predictable, timely resources for bridging the gap".

67. Concrete joint initiatives between the World Bank and UNHCR were launched in Azerbaijan and Burundi, while the cooperative efforts between UNDP and UNHCR in Rwanda were redirected to better facilitate the scaling down and phasing out of UNHCR operations.

68. The UNHCR operational framework for repatriation and reintegration in post-conflict situations was finalized early March 1999 and is being distributed to UNHCR offices in the field, as well as to key operational partners and donors.

69. Project proposals specifically covering refugee aid and development were put forward for Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea during 1998. The proposal for Côte d'Ivoire is very much development-oriented and requires close cooperation with UNDP in approaching donors at an inter-agency. At the request of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, UNHCR is pursuing its cooperation on this with UNDP, within the framework of the 1997 Memorandum of Understanding, as well as that of the General Operations Agreement between UNHCR and the United Nations Office for Project Services, signed in 1998. Operational linkages with development oriented agencies and international financial institutions are also being established. The African Development Bank, for example, remains the focus for initiatives in West Africa.

C. Programme management and delivery

1. General

70. The overall volume of UNHCR activities has been steadily decreasing since 1996 when it was at a peak. This decrease is also reflected in an overall reduction of programme delivery costs in general and Headquarters costs in particular. In the latter case, expenditure decreased from $133 million in 1995 to $104 million in 1998. For 1999, the budget for Headquarters is estimated to be $88 million. This decrease is due, in part, to a considerable reduction in posts. In 1998 alone, the number of posts at Headquarters was reduced by 117, with 75 cuts in the General Staff and 42 in the Professional category.

71. Following an internal review of the management structure at UNHCR Headquarters in late 1998, a reorganization exercise took place designed to streamline and increase its efficiency. This review was led by the Inspector General, assisted by an internal management team.

72. Under the change management process, begun in 1996, certain administrative functions previously assumed by Headquarters, in particular in personnel and financial matters, have now been delegated to the field. Systems development for financial services, the supply chain and operations management also continued in 1998, but will take some time to be fully developed and implemented. Further details are provided in paragraphs 78 to 85 below.

73. In 1998, UNHCR had offices in 125 countries. Some are being closed or downsized in view of contracting programmes. To implement the organization's programmes, agreements were concluded in 1998 with 514 private voluntary organizations. Under these agreements UNHCR disbursed $232 million to its partners.

2. Inspection and evaluation

74. The reporting period has witnessed major changes for the Inspection and Evaluation Service. In order to enhance the functions it performs, it has been decided to separate those of the Inspector General's Office (for inspection and investigation), reporting to the High Commissioner, from the functions of evaluation and policy analysis, and to create a new section for this purpose, under the supervision of the Assistant High Commissioner.

75. During the period under review, inspection missions have taken place to 13 countries in Asia, Europe and Latin America. The whole operation in former Yugoslavia and the two countries of origin of the Great Lakes operation have been inspected. Particular emphasis has been put on overall management (representation, strategy and external relations), operational management (protection and programme) and administrative management, including security and living conditions of UNHCR staff. At the request of the High Commissioner, the Inspector General has reviewed selected Headquarters' activities, beginning with those of the former Division of Human Resources Management. The role of the "desk" function at Headquarters is currently under review.

76. As regards the evaluation function, a comprehensive review by an external consultant in 1998 recommended a number of modifications and improvements. As a result, increased emphasis is being placed on policy analysis and a wider distribution of evaluation reports to partners who can benefit from them. Moreover, the development of new operational management systems is expected to lead to increasing use of self-evaluation. This new approach will encourage programme managers in UNHCR to see evaluation as one of their core responsibilities.

77. In-depth evaluations carried out in 1998 mainly focused on major activities in large operations, analysis of regional strategies and thematic evaluations. Emphasis has also been placed on evaluations in partnership with other agencies, in an effort to address common problems, while reinforcing cooperation and collaboration with partners.

Examples include an evaluation of emergency food assistance in Bosnia and Herzegovina carried out jointly with WFP, and a tripartite study of the Great Lakes Emergency Operation undertaken with UNICEF and WFP.

3. Change management

78. Efforts by UNHCR to re-examine and redefine the way it operates continued in 1998. Much of the work over the past year has focused on the following six priority areas.

(a) The Operations Management System

79. Three dedicated project teams worked for a period of six months in 1998 to advance the development of the new system. A Project Board was established early in the year to oversee its development, endorse the general direction of new processes and procedures and to oversee the design and development of new information systems to support OMS. A draft OMS manual has now been completed and is being reviewed. Strategic planning interventions, with a focus on objectives and outputs, have been completed in the first quarter of 1999 for Georgia, the Great Lakes region of Africa, Kenya and Sri Lanka. Operational guidance materials have been incorporated with other UNHCR informational data onto a CD-ROM for use by offices in the field.

(b) Protection database

80. A prototype protection database has been tested in three pilot field locations, designed to make available an easily accessible and searchable database to UNHCR Headquarters for protection-related information.

(c) Supply chain

81. A single, unified supply chain function is being developed, integrating all relevant information and activities of supply management staff. A computer-based training module has been completed and distributed and work has begun on updated master item and customer catalogues.

(d) Systems replacement

82. A proposal for a new Integrated Systems Project was approved by the High Commissioner in the second half of 1998. Responses to a request for proposal (RFP) are now being evaluated for the core systems of protection and programme management, finance and budget, human resources and supply chain, and it is expected that a decision on a new integrated system can be made before mid-1999. A second RFP has been issued for the compilation of a database of UNHCR knowledge and document management, which UNHCR would like to put in place. A third will be issued for a systems integrator, which will be responsible for any necessary modifications to the new systems and for their introduction over the next two to three years.

(e) Human resources management

83. The delegation of authority to the field for the full administration and management of locally recruited staff has now been implemented. This is the first stage in the delegation of authority to line management. A comprehensive human resource management database has been completed and has been issued to field offices on a CD-ROM. The new Career Management System is being evaluated after one year of implementation to determine whether any adjustments are necessary. A review of the number of human resource policies is ongoing with a view to rationalize and streamline them.

(f) Financial services

84. The decentralization of certain financial functions was implemented in a large number of locations during 1998 and associated training was provided. Work continues on documenting requirements for the new finance and budget system, including the review of UNHCR accounting policies and practices.

85. Although much work has been completed on the change projects, a considerable amount still remains to be done before all the anticipated results will be achieved. Introducing new processes and procedures, developing new information systems and ensuring appropriate training and support for staff that can only be achieved with an investment of resources over an extended period of time.

D. Regional developments in Africa

1. Central, East and West Africa operations

86. Major events during the period under review include the continued flight of Sierra Leonean refugees into Liberia and Guinea as a result of further conflict in Sierra Leone. They currently constitute one of the largest refugee populations in the region, their numbers fluctuating from 330,000 to 410,000. In contrast, the number of Liberian refugees has reduced from 480,000 to some 260,000, following the return of 236,000 during the reporting period. As the conflict in southern Sudan is ongoing, asylum-seekers continue to arrive in neighbouring countries. Despite the return of some 48,000 Somalis into the north-western part of the country, fighting in other parts of Somalia has resulted in further outflows. The border conflict between Eritrea and

Ethiopia has not allowed the repatriation of some 342,000 Eritrean refugees residing in the Sudan.

87. Emergency assistance was provided to some 280,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea and Liberia, fleeing fighting between the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council/Revolutionary United Front rebels and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) troops. This assistance was mainstreamed into care and maintenance programmes by the end of 1998.

88. In March 1998, 8,500 persons fleeing fighting in the Darfur region of southern Sudan, sought asylum in Chad where they benefited from emergency assistance. In February 1999, an additional influx of 14,500 Sudanese refugees from the same ethnic groups received similar assistance in Chad.

89. Internal conflict in Guinea-Bissau in June 1998 caused some 200,000 inhabitants of Bissau City and its surroundings to flee to the countryside. Some assistance was provided to these internally displaced persons. An additional 8,000 persons who sought asylum in neighbouring countries also benefited from emergency assistance.

90. Care and maintenance assistance accounted for nearly half of UNHCR expenditures in Central, East and West Africa. The largest programmes were implemented in Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya and the Sudan. Increased emphasis is being placed on addressing specific needs of women, children and the elderly. Furthermore, UNHCR continues to support environmental projects, including tree planting, energy saving awareness programmes and community-based afforestation projects.

91. In global terms, there has been a 15 per cent reduction of care and maintenance activities in sub-Saharan Africa over the past two years. This has resulted from the scaling-down or phasing-out of care and maintenance programmes, as refugees are able to return to their countries of origin or are settled locally. It should, however, be noted that inadequate or underfunded repatriation programmes often result in fragile and unsustainable reintegration.

92. In Liberia, a stable yet fragile political atmosphere allowed some 235,000 refugees to be repatriated either spontaneously or under the auspices of UNHCR during 1998. It is planned that the movement of returnees will be completed by December 1999, while the integration phase is scheduled to end by June 2000. Similarly, some 10,000 Chadian refugees who returned from the Central African Republic since 1995 are being assisted under a successful reintegration programme in the southern part of the country. Although authorities in the north-western part of Somalia decided to suspend all repatriation operations, an estimated 48,000 refugees left camps in eastern Ethiopia to return to their places of origin in Somalia. It is hoped that, with the establishment of some form of administration in the north-eastern part of Somalia, similar movements will be organized to allow the return of persons to this part of the country.

93. A residual caseload of 12,000 UNHCR-assisted Ethiopian refugees remain in the Sudan following completion of the voluntary repatriation programme in May 1998. They are to be screened to determine their future status. UNHCR is considering applying the cessation clause to pre-1991 Ethiopian refugees in the Sudan and other host countries. The voluntary repatriation and reintegration programme for Malian refugees from Mauritania, Algeria, Burkina Faso and Niger was successfully completed during 1998. Since 1995, the number of those who have been repatriated reached a total of 132,000.

94. The border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia further hindered the prospects for a resumption of repatriation of the some 150,000 UNHCR-assisted Eritrean refugees living in the camps in eastern and central Sudan, which had been suspended since 1995.

95. As part of efforts to implement more sustainable activities, a new self-reliance programme was introduced in Uganda in mid-1998, which aimed at fostering refugee self-reliance while reducing the burden of refugees on the host country. In the Sudan and Ethiopia, UNHCR is supporting crop production to help refugees increase their level of self-sufficiency. Similar efforts are being carried out in the Central African Republic.

96. Insecurity in refugee settlements, resulting from acts of banditry and ethnic violence, has been a growing concern for UNHCR in a number of countries. Internal conflict also hampered UNHCR activities in several countries. In Uganda, insecurity in the northern part of the country forced UNHCR to relocate some refugees who had already been settled. For several months UNHCR has not had access to Sudanese refugees residing in the northern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In Sierra Leone, the operation to facilitate the return of Sierra Leonean professionals and students was suspended in December 1998 when rebels entered Freetown.

97. Inter-State conflicts jeopardized the search for durable solutions in the Horn of Africa and West Africa. The border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia has halted UNHCR's efforts to carry out the voluntary repatriation of 340,000 Eritrean refugees living in the Sudan. Similarly, the situation in West Africa has deteriorated as a result of rebel movements operating across borders.

98. The Organization of African Unity (OAU)Ministerial Meeting on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons, which took place in Khartoum in December 1998, provided a unique opportunity to reaffirm the key principles of asylum and protection. Ways to promote and implement the declaration and the recommendations resulting from this important conference are the subject of follow-up meetings with OAU. A UNHCR/OAU task force has also been set up to follow up on the implementation of the conclusions and recommendations.

2. Great Lakes operations

99. Security concerns, as well as the need to rehabilitate refugee-affected areas in the countries of asylum and returnee areas were the major issues discussed at an inter-ministerial meeting held in Kampala in May 1998, co-chaired by the OAU Secretary-General and UNHCR. Implementation of the conclusions of the meeting was interrupted by the outbreak of war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in August 1998, which has had a significant impact on the humanitarian situation throughout the region. While it had been anticipated that with the signing of the protocol between UNHCR and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 28 July 1998, UNHCR would resume its activities in eastern part of the country, the escalation of hostilities made it more difficult to reach the refugees. The prevailing insecurity forced UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations to evacuate all their staff. Several initiatives by the Southern African Development Community (SADC), supported by the United Nations and OAU, to broker a ceasefire and promote dialogue have not been successful.

100. Meanwhile refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo continue to arrive in the neighbouring countries. Since August 1998, the Congolese refugee caseload in the United Republic of Tanzania has increased by more than 20,000, bringing the total number of Congolese refugees in that country to over 60,000.

101. Insecurity in the north-western part of the United Republic of Tanzania is becoming of increasing concern as a result of irregular movements of armed elements in the vicinity of the camps. To ensure the civilian character of the camps, UNHCR is providing assistance to strengthen the capacity of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to deal with security issues affecting areas populated by refugees.

102. Despite the progress made in the Arusha Peace Negotiations, resulting in suspension of sanctions imposed on Burundi, the security situation in Burundi continues to be precarious. Consequently, repatriation from the United Republic of Tanzania remained limited to some 13,000 in 1998. As a contribution to the reconciliation process in the country, efforts are being made to create conditions conducive to repatriation through the rebuilding of basic infrastructure and establishing basic services in areas of return.

103. Apart from the material assistance provided to refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi and other countries over the last three years, UNHCR has been assisting in the reintegration of returnees in Rwanda. UNHCR plans to phase down its reintegration activities at the end of 1999. To ensure a continuation of the reintegration programme, UNHCR and UNDP, together with WFP, have established the Joint Reintegration Programming Unit.

3. Southern Africa operations

104. After a period of relative stability and optimism, in which UNHCR was able to reduce its presence, southern Africa is again going through a time of uncertainty. The resumption of war in Angola has produced outflows of refugees to Zambia and Namibia. At the same time, refugees from the Great Lakes region of Africa continue to arrive in significant numbers in various southern African countries. South Africa received 15,000 asylum-seekers. In the same period, close to 2,000 asylum-seekers arrived in Botswana from Namibia. Given this increased instability, it will not be possible to close the UNHCR offices scheduled for closure in 1999. At least some staff will need to remain to address the ever-increasing protection and assistance problems.

105. In June 1998, UNHCR was compelled to indefinitely suspend the organized repatriation of Angolan refugees in view of the escalating war in the country and the reluctance of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) to fully implement the 1994 Lusaka Protocol. The main outstanding task was the normalization of State administration in all UNITA-controlled areas. By June 1998 this process had halted completely, and by December 1998 UNITA's armed attacks in government-held areas resulted in UNHCR having to abandon all its eastern and northern field offices. UNHCR assets worth some US$ 4 million were lost as a result of looting. The new fighting resulted in more than 30,000 Angolans being forced to leave the country, bringing the total number of refugees in neighbouring countries to almost 300,000.

106. Despite the political instability that has prevailed in Angola since 1995, some 150,000 Angolan refugees returned

spontaneously between 1995 and December 1998, including 22,000 Angolans who returned in 1998. All the returnees benefited from UNHCR rehabilitated communal infrastructures, such as health clinics, schools, water points and roads. The Angolan returnees also received an individual food package for one year, together with agricultural tools and seeds. After three and a half years of assisting returnees, UNHCR's repatriation operation will be phased out by 30 June 1999. A minimal field presence will be maintained in Angola in order to ensure protection to accessible returnees, as well as protection and basic assistance to over 10,000 Congolese refugees.

107. The continuing arrival of asylum-seekers in Botswana from the Caprivi region of Namibia, since October 1998, is another example of the fragile stability in southern Africa. UNHCR is assisting the Government of Botswana with their status determination and has initiated emergency assistance measures. The best solution for the majority of the group is likely to be voluntary repatriation. Resettlement possibilities are being explored for a few prominent group leaders.

108. Recently, some 4,000 Congolese asylum-seekers have entered Zambia, having fled the fighting in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and several thousand new arrivals are expected. Armed military among the group have been disarmed and separated from the civilians. UNHCR is providing protection and emergency assistance.

109. In 1998, UNHCR contributed to the enactment of national refugee legislation in the region, including the revitalization of status determination procedures. The enactment process in Namibia, Malawi and Swaziland and the recognition of full socio-economic rights for recognized refugees is expected to be completed in the course of 1999.

110. Owing to the continued arrival of asylum-seekers in South Africa, there was a backlog of over 20,000 people awaiting status determination at the end of 1998. Since the majority of those refugees come from countries in the region affected by long-term armed conflict, UNHCR is focusing on local integration as the best immediate solution for this group.

111. UNHCR provided support to the Government of South Africa during the consultative process that led to the 1998 refugee act. In 1999 UNHCR will assist the Government in implementing this act. Xenophobia is on the rise in all southern African countries, but particularly in South Africa which receives thousands of undocumented economic migrants as well as asylum-seekers each month. To help the Government counter xenophobia, UNHCR has been a catalyst in the Roll Back Xenophobia campaign, which was launched in December 1998 in cooperation with many local NGOs and government agencies. The campaign seeks to mobilize many actors, both in Government and civil society, in various awareness raising activities designed to fight a trend that has led to the death of 30 refugees in the last two years.

E. Regional developments in the Americas

112. Operations in this region have continued to focus on durable solutions for refugees in Mexico, Belize and Central America, with a special impetus to the final stages of repatriation to Guatemala. Close to 4,000 Guatemalan refugees were repatriated in 1998 with UNHCR assistance and over 800 more in the first three months of 1999, bringing the cumulative total since the first assisted movements in 1984 to over 42,000. Most people were repatriated from Mexico, with close to 80 per cent of the organized collective returns and individual movements taking place from the southern State of Chiapas. The repatriation and reintegration operation will be phased out at the end of June 1999, as scheduled. UNHCR has sought to preserve the level of legal and socio-economic reintegration achieved in respect of these returnees and to facilitate a smooth transition to longer-term development efforts led by national institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, United Nations agencies and other international organizations. The goal is to ensure that all the actors concerned are fully apprised of gaps in returnee areas and to address them during their planning processes.

113. Further progress has also been made in implementing the migratory stabilization plan for Guatemalan refugees launched by the Mexican Government in August 1996, as well as in the socio-economic integration of the Guatemalan refugees who choose not to be repatriated. Implementation of the plan has proceeded as planned in the States of Campeche and Quintana Roo, with over 600 former refugees, over half of them women, now in possession of citizenship cards, while close to 2,000 refugees have initiated procedures leading to naturalization. The seven refugee settlements in both states have now been formally recognized as new Mexican villages in the respective municipalities through bills passed by the Congress of each State. Most basic services (education, health, electricity) have been fully taken over by Mexican institutions. In another landmark development, supported by UNHCR, federal and state authorities formally announced, in June 1998, that legal immigrant status would be granted to refugees in Chiapas. Over 5,000 now hold legal immigrant documents, which, after five years of annual renewal, entitles the holder to apply for permanent residence. As of

the second half of 1998, UNHCR has been supporting a multi-year programme to facilitate the socio-economic integration of the refugees. The programme, expected to conclude by the end of 2000, consists of two principal components: construction, rehabilitation or expansion of social infrastructure in refugee areas to enable the state authorities to take over basic services (principally in the education and health sectors) provided to refugees and neighbouring Mexican communities under equal conditions; and activities aimed at securing self-sufficiency for the refugees (savings and micro-credit schemes). As at 31 December 1998, there were some 24,000 Guatemalan refugees in south-eastern Mexico, of whom close to 14,000 were in Chiapas.

114. Residual caseloads in other Latin American countries and the Caribbean have been assisted individually with voluntary repatriation or local integration, including the acquisition of permanent residence and/or citizenship. In Belize alone, close to 500 refugees became citizens with the help of UNHCR in 1998, and there are indications that present requirements might be lessened, which would accelerate the process considerably. Following the meeting of Central American Presidents in El Salvador, on 9 November 1998, to appeal for aid in recovering from Hurricane Mitch, Costa Rica adopted an amnesty aimed primarily at regularizing the situation of illegal aliens from Central America, Belize and Panama residing in Costa Rica prior to 9 November 1998. Specific provisions of the executive decree granting the amnesty extend its benefits to refugees. UNHCR has been encouraging refugees to avail themselves of the simplified procedure afforded by the amnesty to become permanent residents.

115. The concerns of UNHCR in South America have primarily been focused on forced displacement owing to the conflict in Colombia and its implications for neighbouring countries. Border regions adjacent to Panama, Ecuador and Venezuela are amongst those most affected by violence and displacement. It will be recalled that, in response to a request from the Colombian Government, the High Commissioner decided to open a liaison office in Bogotá, with a view to providing UNHCR expertise to enhance national efforts in favour of internally displaced persons. At the end of January 1999, the Government of Colombia and the High Commissioner signed a memorandum of intent outlining the operational content of the UNHCR role in assisting internally displaced persons in Colombia. The memorandum of intent foresees, in particular, the provision by UNHCR of expertise and technical cooperation to strengthen national mechanisms (governmental and non-governmental, at central and local levels) for protection and assistance to internally displaced persons, as well as expertise in relation to all phases of displacement, namely prevention, emergency response, providing solutions and support of international cooperation for assistance to internationally displaced persons.

116. In the United States and Canada, UNHCR monitors legislative, judicial and policy developments impacting upon access to refugee status determination procedures, the quality of asylum and the availability of resettlement in these countries as a durable solution. The detention of asylum-seekers in the United States has been a particular focus of concern for UNHCR during the reporting period. UNHCR continues to follow closely the Canadian immigration legislative review process and is engaged in an ongoing dialogue with the Department of Citizenship and Immigration regarding the reform proposals currently under development. In the Caribbean, UNHCR works towards strengthening the framework for international protection by supporting the efforts of Governments to develop and implement procedures for refugee status determination and by establishing protection networks among legal professionals, non-governmental organizations, church groups and other concerned actors in civil society.

117. Few countries in the Americas and the Caribbean have yet to accede to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. Most countries in Latin America already apply a broader refugee definition consistent with the 1984 Cartagena Declaration. UNHCR has nevertheless stepped up efforts to promote accession not only to the refugee international instruments, but also to the statelessness instruments, as part of a campaign launched by the High Commissioner in 1998. UNHCR has also continued to promote the enactment or amendment of national refugee legislation and the establishment of the institutions needed to ensure the protection of refugees, including procedures for refugee status determination. In these and other initiatives, UNHCR has worked closely with regional bodies such as the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights and the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights.

F. Regional developments in Asia and the Pacific

1. South Asia operations

118. The voluntary repatriation of Muslim refugees from camps in Bangladesh to Myanmar resumed in November 1998 after two years, but the number of returnees has been small owing to various procedural problems. UNHCR has

urged the Government of Myanmar to accelerate the pace of the repatriation. Although some 230,000 refugees have returned to Myanmar since 1992, some 22,000, for whom care and maintenance activities continued throughout 1998, remain in Bangladesh. Discussions have been initiated with the Bangladesh authorities to examine possibilities for self-reliance for those refugees who will not return to Myanmar in the near future.

119. In Myanmar, steady progress continues to be made in reintegrating returnees from Bangladesh in northern Rakhine State. Activities to improve local infrastructure and provide for greater agricultural productivity and income-generation opportunities have had a significant effect on the economically vulnerable and have served to stabilize population movements in the area. UNHCR continues to maintain a dialogue with the authorities on various issues affecting the local Muslim population in order to enhance their legal status, facilitate their freedom of movement and reduce instances of unpaid labour and arbitrary rice taxation that have contributed to refugee flows in the past. UNHCR is also facilitating the establishment of a five-year United Nations Integrated Development Plan, which will permit a phasing-down of assistance activities during 2000.

120. In Sri Lanka, armed conflict between the Sri Lankan authorities and the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam continues to lead to population displacements in the Vanni region. At the same time, increasing numbers of internally displaced persons are returning from the Vanni region to the northern Jaffna Peninsula and to areas of safety in the southern Vavuniya and Mannar districts. The focus of UNHCR's programme in Sri Lanka was therefore reoriented in 1998 to protecting internally displaced persons in conflict areas, stabilizing population displacements through infrastructure support to host communities and promoting the reintegration of internally displaced persons in areas of settlement. The geographic focus of assistance activities is increasingly being shifted to the Jaffna Peninsula.

121. The resumption of voluntary repatriation for over 70,000 Sri Lankan refugees in India was not possible owing to the ongoing conflict in Sri Lanka. Efforts to promote the self-reliance of some 17,000 urban refugees, mainly from Afghanistan, continued during 1998. Increased attention has also been directed at building greater awareness of refugee issues in civil society and promoting the dissemination of refugee law among academic institutions and professional bodies in India.

122. UNHCR continued to support care and maintenance activities for some 96,000 Bhutanese refugees living in seven camps in eastern Nepal. Although no agreement has been reached between the Governments of Bhutan and Nepal on solutions for these refugees, bilateral discussions at the ministerial level resumed in November 1998 after a period of two years. UNHCR is ready to assist in implementing an agreement on repatriation reached between the two Governments.

123. The fifth Regional Consultations on Refugee and Migratory Movements in South Asia, supported by UNHCR, were held in Kathmandu in November 1998. The draft model law drawn up at the last consultations in Dhaka in 1997 and measures to promote the adoption of this law by States in South Asia were discussed at the meeting.

2. East Asia and the Pacific operations

124. UNHCR continued to support repatriation, resettlement and self-reliance measures throughout 1998 aimed at achieving durable solutions for the former Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA) caseload of some 1,800 Vietnamese refugees and non-refugees remaining in the region. As the majority of this population, who reside in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, have achieved self-reliance, UNHCR camp-based assistance was phased out at the end of 1998. UNHCR will continue to provide a modest level of self-reliance assistance and a safety net for vulnerable individuals, if necessary, up to September 1999, when this programme will be concluded.

125. UNHCR will phase out its local settlement assistance to Vietnamese refugees in China in 1999, upon completion of a revolving credit mechanism initiated in 1994, through which refugees have achieved self-reliance. Refugees and their host communities will continue to benefit from employment opportunities under the scheme.

126. A small number of Laotians (1,356) remained in Ban Napho camp in Thailand as of 1 March 1999. Following the completion of an individual case status review in 1998, 1,145 individuals were considered to no longer meet internationally recognized refugee criteria. UNHCR is consulting with the concerned Governments on the phasing out of UNHCR camp-based assistance to the non-refugee caseload by mid-1999 while continuing to identify resettlement and other durable solutions for refugees. Returnee reintegration and monitoring assistance will be continued in Viet Nam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic throughout 1999.

127. In July 1998, the Government of Thailand invited UNHCR to play a more active role in regard to some 105,000 ethnic Karen and Karenni refugees from Myanmar residing in 12 settlements along the Thai side of the border, where UNHCR subsequently opened field offices in October

1998. Their work has been essentially protection-related and included developing criteria and advocating for the admission of asylum-seekers to camps; providing assistance in relocating vulnerable camps to safer sites; and registering camp populations in order to enhance individual refugee protection and ensure the civilian character of the camps. By March 1999, a pilot registration had been successfully undertaken in collaboration with the Thai authorities in one camp. Plans for the relocation of two camps further from the border are in progress and several hundred new asylum-seekers have been permitted entry into the camps following action on their behalf by UNHCR.

128. During 1998, UNHCR provided emergency relief to some 60,000 Cambodian refugees in four camps in Thailand and supported repatriation and reintegration assistance for 7,000 individuals who voluntarily returned under UNHCR auspices. Following a peace settlement between the Government and opposition forces in December 1998, repatriation activities gained rapid momentum. In the first quarter of 1999, UNHCR assisted the voluntary repatriation of some 25,000 Cambodians, while an estimated 11,000 individuals returned spontaneously. By end of March 1999 all camps were closed.

129. Cambodians who were repatriated under the auspices of UNHCR were provided with transport, a household kit, agricultural items and food relief from the World Food Programme (WFP). In collaboration with specialized demining agencies, UNHCR ensured that priority attention was given to the clearance of anti-personnel mines and unexploded ordnance on principal repatriation routes and at arrival points. UNHCR will also support landmine surveys, demarcation and emergency clearance activities at high risk returnee locations and will continue to monitor the situation of returnees. Returnees and their host communities will benefit from community-based quick impact projects that aim to repair damage sustained in the water, health, education and community services sectors. Such assistance is complemented where feasible by WFP food for work programmes and implemented in coordination with development-oriented agencies to ensure the longer-term sustainability of returnee reintegration.

130. UNHCR has closely monitored population movements linked to the impact of the financial crisis in several countries in the region. Emergency preparedness workshops and contingency planning consultations were undertaken as a tangible expression of the willingness of UNHCR to work with concerned Governments in preparing humanitarian measures in the event of sudden outflows and to stabilize populations at risk of internal and external displacement.

131. The third meeting of the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Consultations on Regional Approaches to Refugees and Displaced Persons (APC) was co-hosted by UNHCR and the Government of Thailand, and co-chaired by UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on 9 and 10 June 1998 in Bangkok. The meeting discussed the impact of migratory flows and the relevance of prevention and preparedness in the context of the prevailing economic crisis in the region. The APC secretariat also assisted in a consultative capacity in the organization of the International Symposium for Migration, which was held by the Government of Thailand in March 1999. The perception of APC as a viable regional forum for the discussion of issues relating to migration and refugees is gaining recognition amongst States in the region.

G. Regional developments in Europe

1. Operations in Europe

(a) Western Europe and Baltic States

132. In 1998, the 15 member States of the European Union received a total of 304,000 asylum applications, representing an increase of 21 per cent as compared to 1997. This increase was almost entirely the result of arrivals from the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom received two thirds of all asylum-seekers from the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia who lodged applications in Europe during 1998.

133. UNHCR continues to strengthen its participation and relevance in European asylum policy developments through enhanced cooperation with the European Union, its member States and institutions. Close cooperation also continues with the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and many other European forums. Consultations between UNHCR and the European Union increasingly concentrate on measures that the European Union will have to adopt in a number of areas of asylum and protection policy, as required by the Treaty of Amsterdam. Their aim is to change the restrictive approach currently followed by some European Union member States concerning access to asylum procedures, narrow interpretation of the refugee definition and the practice of detaining asylum-seekers and to encourage a comprehensive, regional approach to issues that relate to asylum and migration through such mechanisms as the recently established High-Level Working Group on Asylum and Migration.

(b) Central Europe

134. Measures to strengthen asylum systems continue to figure prominently in discussions with Governments and NGOs. Moreover, as States increasingly assume responsibility for assisting asylum-seekers and refugees, NGOs that have relied on UNHCR funding in the past are being encouraged to seek alternative sources of funding.

135. Discussions with the European Commission regarding cooperation on asylum issues in the coming years have continued, with plans for cooperation to begin formally in 1999 under the Assistance for the Reconstruction of the Economy (PHARE) multi-country programme established by Poland and Hungary. Asylum issues have also been incorporated into PHARE national programmes.

(c) Eastern Europe

136. In Armenia, the emergency phase has ended and UNHCR's assistance is increasingly focused on promoting the naturalization of refugees and adoption of relevant legislation and on implementing long-term sustainable development activities designed to help the refugees to integrate into Armenian society. Naturalization has been promoted in 1998 and the programme has been re-directed in support of this objective.

137. A fragile situation prevails in Azerbaijan and no significant progress has been achieved in the process of peace negotiations. The humanitarian programme run by UNHCR in Azerbaijan has moved towards a long-term development phase, with a stronger emphasis on the integration of refugees and internally displaced persons and on enhancing cooperation with other international agencies such as the World Bank and UNDP. These joint efforts aim, as part of an integrated strategy, to rehabilitate the war-damaged territories of Azerbaijan, to facilitate the return of internally displaced persons to the region and to create conditions conducive to self-reliance among those for whom durable solutions have not yet been found.

138. Belarus' drive to recognize refugees and work with international organizations towards their full integration has been encouraging. In Georgia, the declaration of a unilateral return of refugees and internally displaced persons by the Abkhaz side and its non-acceptance by the Georgian Government has contributed to tension along the border. Moldova's political decision to set up a Commission to draft legislation on establishing a national refugee law is an encouraging step towards formalizing the Government's position on refugee populations.

139. With the release of Vincent Cochetel, UNHCR field office head in Vladikavkaz, from captivity in Chechnya, UNHCR resumed its activities to assist internally displaced persons in the northern Caucasus region of the Russian Federation. The presence of UNHCR has, however, been reduced to minimal staffing levels and tight security measures have been put in place.

140. Refugee status determination under the mandate of UNHCR and the processing of resettlement cases continue to dominate UNHCR activities and staff resources in Turkey. Close cooperation between UNHCR and government officials responsible for refugee related matters has improved the general situation of refugees and asylum-seekers in the country.

141. In the Ukraine, some 20,000 stateless formerly deported Crimean Tatars obtained Ukrainian citizenship under a UNHCR-sponsored campaign to combat statelessness among formerly deported peoples. Some 40,000 persons may still face the possibility of being stateless.

2. The CIS Conference follow-up

142. The June 1998 Steering Group meeting confirmed that the CIS Conference follow-up remained broadly on track and reaffirmed the importance and utility of the entire process. The majority of Governments of the Commonwealth of Independent States have maintained their commitment to the CIS Conference process and several have paid increased attention to strengthening the institutional frameworks appropriate for effective management of migration and displacement. UNHCR partnerships with the OSCE, the Council of Europe and other organizations have also continued to develop.

143. The involvement of local and international NGOs has been recognized as a successful outcome of the CIS Conference process. During 1998, five issue-specific NGO working groups were established to facilitate and coordinate NGO participation in the Conference process and to implement the Programme of Action. The NGO Fund, set up in 1997 to increase UNHCR cooperation with local NGOs, was implemented in 1998 in all the 12 countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

144. The process was nevertheless constrained by a decreased level of international attention and political support. To address this, consultations are taking place to find suitable ways of reinvigorating the CIS Conference process and to prepare for the penultimate annual Steering Group meeting scheduled for June 1999. In December 1998, UNHCR and IOM jointly launched their appeals for the CIS countries.

3. Former Yugoslavia

145. Following the signature of the Dayton Peace Agreement and the Erdut Agreement in 1995, 1998 was the third year of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. In meetings in December 1997, which set objectives for 1998, the Peace Implementation Council and its Humanitarian Issues Working Group recognized that large-scale repatriation to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1998 would be contingent on successful "minority" return movements, in particular to Sarajevo and to the Republika Srpska, and demanded that the authorities act resolutely to eliminate all barriers to return. This emphasis on minority returns was a major feature of UNHCR activity in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia throughout the year. The Peace Implementation Council also requested that UNHCR develop a regional strategy for the return of refugees, recognizing that durable solutions in the region were inter-linked. In Bosnia and Herzegovina and throughout the region of the former Yugoslavia, UNHCR programmes continued to focus on the promotion of durable solutions for refugees and displaced persons, especially repatriation and return, as well as on ensuring a phased reduction of care and maintenance assistance. Meanwhile, UNHCR was obliged to mount a major emergency relief operation to respond to the needs of persons displaced by the violence in the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which erupted in the last days of February 1998.

146. At the beginning of 1998, the largest concentrations of refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina awaiting durable solutions were in Germany (some 200,000) and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (close to 250,000). At the end of 1998, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia hosted the largest number of refugees in the region, some 200,000 from Bosnia and Herzegovina and almost 300,000 from Croatia. In addition, a small number of refugees of other nationalities in Belgrade continued to receive support. Given developments in the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, asylum applications lodged by people leaving the province increased sharply throughout the year: over 98,000 applied for asylum in 26 European States in 1998.

147. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the international community made a push to augment the number of minority returns through the Sarajevo Conference on the Return of Refugees (in February) and the Banja Luka Regional Return Conference (in April). In June 1998, UNHCR presented its regional strategy for the sustainable return of those displaced by the conflict in the former Yugoslavia to meetings of the Humanitarian Issues Working Group and the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board, identifying actions at the national and regional levels to enable sustainable durable solutions regionally.

148. The year therefore witnessed an extraordinary level of engagement and commitment by the international community and, when needed, intense pressure and direct interventions to promote a significant increase in minority return movements throughout the region. Despite these efforts, the numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons remained high owing to continuing political, security and economic factors which prevented people from returning to their homes. The numbers of refugees and displaced persons who returned home in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1998 was 110,000 and 30,000, respectively, bringing total returns to and within Bosnia and Herzegovina since the signature of the Dayton Agreement to over 550,000. During 1998, it is estimated that less than 41,500 people returned as minorities, including some 9,400 to Sarajevo. The latter was below the target of 20,000 minority returns to the capital contained in the Sarajevo Declaration. The first month of 1999 saw the repatriation of less than 2,500 refugees and the return of 1,000 displaced persons.

149. In April 1998, the Government of Croatia issued "Procedures for the return of persons who have left the Republic of Croatia" and mandatory instructions for their implementation. To ensure an integrated and comprehensive return and reintegration mechanism, the international community assisted the Government in developing a return programme, which was adopted by the Parliament in June 1998. This programme addresses key issues crucial to ensure the sustainability of the return process, such as restitution of property and related matters. Implementation began in July 1998. During the year, a total of over 53,000 persons returned to and within Croatia, comprising over 13,000 refugees who were repatriated from abroad, and close to 40,000 displaced persons who returned within the country. These movements included the repatriation of 98 refugees who participated in the first organized repatriation movements from the Republika Srpska. Movements of displaced persons included the return of over 18,000 ethnic Croats to the Croatian Danube region and of some 16,500 ethnic Serbs to other parts of Croatia from the Danube region, as well as of 5,000 ethnic Croats to other locations. Ethnic Serbs continued to leave the Croatian Danube region, mainly bound for Vojvodina province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Through mid-March 1999, over 5,000 additional returns had taken place (approximately 1,000 refugees from abroad and 4,000 displaced returned in-country).

150. While the return programme is now fully operational, the return process is inextricably linked to government

action in reconstructing and repossessing property, providing alternative accommodation and economic revitalization, as well as to the delivery of humanitarian assistance to returnees upon arrival. As in 1998, UNHCR will play a catalytic role in 1999 to facilitate go-and-see visits and undertake mass information campaigns in the region. By mid-March 1999, some 15,000 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina had registered to repatriate from Croatia, over 80 per cent of whom wish to return to the Republika Srpska. UNHCR expects the Government, in line with its commitments, to lend its full support to its efforts to repatriate these refugees.

151. The conflict in the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia led to new movements of displaced persons and refugees in the region. During the period under review, their number peaked in October 1998, with some 200,000 people internally displaced in the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 20,000 in other parts of Serbia and 42,000 in Montenegro, as well 20,500 refugees in Albania and smaller numbers in other countries, mainly in European Union member States. The 13 October 1998 Holbrooke-Milosevic Agreement and related agreements between the authorities and OSCE and NATO, respectively, led to the deployment of the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission and a significant reduction in security forces in the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and spurred return movements. By the end of 1998, it was estimated that there were still some 175,000 displaced persons within the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Over 100,000 had returned to their homes, including 10,000 from Montenegro. Renewed fighting in the last days of 1998 and into 1999, however, led to intense international pressure to begin peace negotiations, of which the first phase was completed in Rambouillet, France, on 23 February 1999. Between 23 February and 15 March 1999, date of the commencement of the second round of peace talks in Paris, well over 30,000 additional persons fled their homes, reflecting a considerable worsening in the security and humanitarian situations. Early March saw an influx of refugees from the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia into the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as violence spread to the eastern border region of the Kosovo province for the first time. By 15 March, at least 230,000 people were displaced inside the Kosovo province, 30,000 in other parts of Serbia and 25,000 in Montenegro; combined with the presence of 18,500 refugees in Albania and 7,300 in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as well as large numbers in other countries. In the last week of March 1999, these movements were to escalate into an emergency of unprecedented scale and gravity.

152. During 1998, UNHCR also concentrated on implementing annex 7 of the Dayton Peace Agreement and on achieving a breakthrough in repatriation to Croatia, in close cooperation with the Office of the High Representative (OHR) and the Reconstruction and Return Task Force (RRTF), as well as OSCE Missions in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. A total of 14 Open Cities were recognized in Bosnia and Herzegovina by the end of 1998, which have attracted 15,000 minority returns and drawn investments of some US$ 116 million, including US$ 21 million of UNHCR funds. Shelter-related activities benefited some 3,800 households and also repaired social infrastructure. The number of displaced persons lodged in collective centres diminished to some 12,000. Sustainability of return was ensured through other UNHCR programmes, including income-generation, micro-credit, provision of returnee packages and community services. A total of 167 projects were implemented in 1998 within the framework of the Bosnian women's initiative. In the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, notwithstanding the emergency in the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, UNHCR continued to promote repatriation whilst also pursuing local settlement activities. In Croatia, UNHCR cooperated closely with OSCE and the Article 11 Commission in efforts to encourage the authorities to set in place procedures and legislation conducive to large-scale repatriation of refugees from abroad, while continuing to support in-country returns of displaced persons. Resettlement of refugees to third countries continued from the region, principally for cases of family reunification and protection. In 1998, the total number of persons resettled was nearly 7,000, mostly from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

153. In December 1998, the Peace Implementation Council resolved that 1999 and 2000 should be devoted to making peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina self-sustaining, with an emphasis on enabling a free choice regarding return. The Council resolved to support every effort to create the conditions for a major step forward on refugee returns to their own homes in 1999, on the basis of the 1999 Action Plan of the Reconstruction and Return Task Force. UNHCR is cooperating closely with the Office of the High Representative and other international players in an effort to substantially improve the rate of return in 1999. UNHCR is concerned, however, that donor support may be waning for the region, particularly when it comes to meeting the care and maintenance needs of the over 500,000 refugees in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

H. Regional developments in Central Asia, South-West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East

1. South-West Asia

154. In South-West Asia, the lack of a political settlement, violations of human rights and the absence of adequate economic opportunities in Afghanistan have prevented large numbers of Afghan refugees from returning home from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan where 2.6 million refugees still reside. Despite these obstacles, some 107,000 Afghan refugees nevertheless repatriated voluntarily in 1998 and some 2,500 during the first 3 months of 1999. During 1998, insufficient funding for voluntary repatriation to Afghanistan resulted in reduced reintegration activities in the areas of return and a halt to return late in the year. All United Nations activities, including those of UNHCR, were seriously hampered by the absence of international staff, for security reasons, inside Afghanistan between August 1998 and March 1999. UNHCR has been following the principles contained in the United Nations strategic framework for Afghanistan and the recommendations of the Afghanistan Support Group, which met in May and December 1998.

155. More than 10,000 Kurdish refugees were repatriated from the Islamic Republic of Iran to the north of Iraq during the first half of 1998. Unfortunately this operation had to be suspended mid-1998 because of changes in procedures required by the Iraqi authorities.

2. Central Asia

156. Significant progress was achieved in the region with regard to accession to international refugee instruments dealing with the protection of refugees, the establishment of national refugee laws and the legal and administrative mechanisms required to protect and assist asylum-seekers and refugees. The return of Tajik refugees and their reintegration in Tajikistan has been successful and is expected to be completed by the end of 1999.

3. Western Sahara

157. Notwithstanding further delays in implementing the United Nations Settlement Plan for Western Sahara, it is hoped that this plan will lead to a durable solution for Sahrawi refugees. The United Nations Settlement Plan clearly defines the role of UNHCR in repatriating refugees, together with their immediate family members, to their place of origin to vote in the referendum. Under UNHCR's mandate, any residual caseload remaining in the Tindouf camps would be jointly screened on an individual basis by UNHCR and the authorities of the country of asylum to identify appropriate solutions. Implementation of the UNHCR voluntary repatriation programme will be in accordance with international standards and principles, as well as the objectives of the United Nations Settlement Plan. The voluntary repatriation operation, however, can only begin once key activities of the United Nations Settlement Plan are completed.

4. The Middle East

158. UNHCR's work in the region was strongly affected in 1998 and early 1999 by continuing instability in Iraq. Turkish refugees of Kurdish origin, who were living precariously in northern Iraq, were permitted by the Iraqi authorities in May 1998 to move to Makhmour within Iraqi Government-controlled territory. Following a security incident in July 1998, UNHCR withdrew from the camp. Nevertheless, the refugees continued to receive assistance provided for under United Nations Security Council resolution 986 (1995) (oil for food), while UNHCR provided additional life-sustaining assistance through the Iraqi Red Crescent Society. In December 1998, after long negotiations with the authorities concerning safe and regular access to the camp, security for UNHCR staff and for the refugees and measures to ensure the civilian nature of the camp, UNHCR resumed its presence in Makhmour.

Chapter IV
Financing of UNHCR operations

159. For 1998, the initial budget approved by the Executive Committee was $1.1 billion, of which $440 million was intended for General Programmes and $661 million for Special Programmes. This level represented a further downsizing of operations as compared with 1996 ($1.4 billion) and 1997 ($1.2 billion). 1998 was marked by a continuous process to adjust operational priorities and obligations to the reduced financial resources available. Total contributions by donors totalled $769 million, compared with $969 million in 1996 and $806 million in 1997.

160. The funding of General Programmes reached $327 million in 1998 compared with $346 million in 1996 and $320 million in 1997. This difficult situation was compounded by an exceptionally low carry-over from 1997 of unobligated funds amounting to $2.5 million, compared with $30.2 million in 1996 and $52 million in 1995. Consequently, the Office was obliged to exercise restraint in its financial management. It was also decided to adopt

self-imposed limitations on use of the Voluntary Repatriation Fund, the Emergency Fund and the Programme Reserve. In this manner and by reviewing priorities and slowing down implementation rates towards the end of the year, the Office managed to balance expenditures with income. In October 1998, the Executive Committee adopted a reduced 1999 General Programmes budget of $429 million.

161. The downward funding trend was influenced by the continuing strong value of the dollar, the inability of some donors to maintain past contribution levels and reduced interest earnings. To redress this trend, early in the year, UNHCR issued an appeal, which drew special attention to the Office's core functions undertaken under the General Programmes, including protection, voluntary repatriation and new emergencies.

162. In 1998, several appeals were launched for Special Programmes, most in conjunction with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, with funding received initially totalling $671 million. To facilitate resource mobilization, these appeals were consolidated into a 1998 Global Appeal, published in April 1998. Against this target, $441 million was received during the year.

163. While a small number of Special Programmes were fully funded, most received considerably less than the appeal budget. Some Special Programmes remained severely underfunded, forcing the Office to readjust operational priorities and budgets on an ongoing basis. Programmes particularly affected were repatriation/rehabilitation programme in West Africa, Rwanda, the Great Lakes region of Africa and Afghanistan. Consequently, operating budgets for Special Programmes were set at a total of $551 million.

164. The Office intensified its efforts to maintain early, adequate, predictable and flexible funding. In this context, in addition to the General Programme appeal and the 1998 Global Appeal mentioned above, the Office also produced a mid-year progress report. In November 1998, it also issued the 1999 Global Appeal, covering all activities under General and Special Programmes. The Office also engaged in informal consultations with members of the Executive Committee on a revised and more transparent budget structure and on standardized and improved reporting. These consultations resulted in broad agreement. Once introduced, these changes should contribute to improve the capacity of the High Commissioner to discharge her mandate.

165. For 1999, budgetary requirements are $914 million, including a General Programme target of $413 million approved by the Executive Committee. While total carry-over from 1998 was $138.1 million, of which $9.5 million is under the General Programmes, income projections for the year will once again require very careful allocation of resources.

Chapter V
Cooperation/coordination

A. Cooperation between UNHCR, other members of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations

166. During the reporting period, global or country-specific cooperation agreements were updated or concluded with several international agencies dealing with issues of a humanitarian nature. Country-specific agreements were concluded with IOM in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia, on issues related to the return and reintegration of refugees. UNHCR also signed agreements with WFP on the coordination of logistics in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)on similar arrangements in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. Finally, UNDP and UNHCR renewed their agreement related to reintegration activities in Rwanda.

167. Global cooperation agreements were concluded with the Andean Commission of Jurists and the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights concentrating on information-sharing and technical assistance in human rights, refugee protection and related areas. A memorandum of understanding relating specifically to the global fight against AIDS was reached with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), while a memorandum of understanding with the World Bank focused on post-conflict reconstruction. Both these agreements serve to strengthen ongoing collaboration and to establish operational and practical modalities of cooperation. An agreement was also reached with the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships.

168. The implementation of cooperation agreements with key operational partners is periodically reviewed through high-level meetings. During the reporting period, such meetings were held with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), IOM, WFP and the World Bank. Though no global cooperation agreement has been signed with the ICRC, annual high-level meetings are held to review common concerns and to exchange views on policies and operational modalities. The 1998 high-level meeting with ICRC was chaired by the High Commissioner and addressed the issues of security of humanitarian

operations and the dissemination of humanitarian and refugee law and principles. Working-level meetings at the Headquarters level were held on a regular basis with key strategic partners, including FAO and UNDP.

169. Furthermore, in 1998, and the first quarter of 1999, over 100 staff members of other United Nations organizations and intergovernmental bodies participated in UNHCR training courses, with particular emphasis on staff security-awareness training. Other courses included people-oriented planning for gender-sensitive programme planning; programme management; food and nutrition management; refugee law and protection, and returnee monitoring; negotiation and mediation skills; supplies and logistics; education for refugees; and environmental education.

B. Coordination with other members of the United Nations system

170. 1998 witnessed particularly significant developments in this area beginning with the transformation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs into the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs with a renewed focus on its core functions of coordination, policy development and advocacy. The year also saw a strengthening of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs and the Executive Committee on Peace and Security mechanisms for coordination. UNHCR participated in the first humanitarian segment of the Economic and Social Council in July 1998, which proved a successful first step in bringing together the intergovernmental and inter-agency processes.

171. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee mechanism became more effective through increased informal consultations on issues such as humanitarian coordination arrangements and plans of action concerning specific complex emergencies. In addition, a series of reference groups, task forces and sub-working groups were established to focus on issues including improving the Consolidated Appeals Process, field practices and an inter-agency training module for situations involving internally displaced persons, the humanitarian impact of sanctions, small arms, gender and relief development linkages. UNHCR was fully involved in both the consultations and the issue-focused groups.

172. There was improvement in addressing matters of field coordination expeditiously owing to the increased consultation within the Inter-Agency Standing Committee process, as well as the smooth and regular functioning of both the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs and the Executive Committee on Peace and Security. Concurrently joint needs assessment and contingency planning exercises were strengthened.

173. While progress was made on the development of certain tools, such as a field practices manual, relevant to the issue of internally displaced persons, the whole area of operational responsibility still requires further clarification. It is hoped that the Inter-Agency Standing Committee mechanism will prove to be the appropriate forum to provide such guidance.

174. UNHCR continued to promote the issue of staff security and safety within the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and its subsidiary machinery and to coordinate training in this area through the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator. At the initiative of UNHCR, ACC adopted two statements — both in 1998 — underscoring the need to reinforce safety and security measures, particularly training, and the responsibilities of Member States to ensure the safety of United Nations and associated personnel. Together with UNICEF and WFP, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the United Nations Security Coordinator dealing with funding of security advisers posts.

175. In view of its importance, the Secretary-General's report on "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (A/52/891) was discussed as the main theme for the fall session of ACC in 1998. UNHCR drew attention to five issues among those raised in the report, namely good governance, the development implications of voluntary return of refugees, the need to reconfirm respect for humanitarian and refugee law and principles, the "ladder of options" to address security concerns in refugee camps and settlements and the reintegration gap.

176. During the reporting period, UNHCR actively participated in discussions held within ACC and its subsidiary bodies on the strategic framework for Afghanistan and related issues such as the generic guidelines. Also within those inter-agency coordination bodies, UNHCR has been following up on issues of system-wide importance, such as the Resident Coordinator System, the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

C. Relations with non-governmental organizations

177. During 1998, UNHCR entered into project agreements with 506 NGOs to implement operational activities with

refugee and other populations of concern to UNHCR. This figure includes 400 national and 106 international NGOs.

178. UNHCR continued to promote the UNHCR/NGO Partnership in Action (PARinAC) process, aimed at enhancing the cooperation and coordination of activities in favour of refugees, including meetings on specific issues, as well as the three-day annual pre-Executive Committee UNHCR/NGO consultations. The latter was attended by approximately 150 NGOs, including PARinAC Regional Focal Points and southern NGOs. The agenda included a general discussion between NGOs and the High Commissioner.

179. Three regional PARinAC meetings for national NGOs took place during the year in Japan, Ghana and Ethiopia. UNHCR/NGO regional recommendations for joint action were drawn up at these meetings. All three meetings concluded with joint UNHCR/NGO training in either international protection or people-oriented planning. Towards the end of 1998, UNHCR launched a PARinAC in the year 2000 plan to review progress since the 1994 Oslo Meeting and to refocus and revitalize PARinAC in the light of the changed environment in which humanitarian action is conducted.

180. Throughout the year, the participation of NGOs as observers in meetings of the Standing Committee of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme followed the procedure outlined in the June 1997 Standing Committee decision on NGO observer participation. NGOs made nine joint interventions under nine agenda items. A decision was taken by the Standing Committee to extend NGO observer participation through 1999 and 2000.

181. The joint UNHCR/NGO Working Group drafting a framework agreement on operational partnership met in 1998 to finalize the draft agreement. A workshop is planned in 1999 to launch the agreement with the participation of national NGOs. A draft plan for PARinAC in the year 2000 and a strategy on meeting the needs of national NGOs was approved by UNHCR's senior management. Work will continue on these in 1999.

182. During 1998, some 350 NGO staff members worldwide benefitted from UNHCR-sponsored training, including training in the areas of protection, emergency management, programme management, people-oriented planning, food aid and registration, nutrition, logistics, security awareness, environment and resettlement.

Notes

[1] By the week of 24 to 31 March 1999, 100,000 Kosovar refugees had entered neighbouring countries, mainly Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the outflow was continuing in the thousands on a daily basis.

Table 1
UNHCR expenditure in 1998 by operations bureau/country and type of assistance activity
(All sources of funds; thousands of United States dollars)

Operations bureau/ country or area	*Type of assistance*						
	Emergency assistance	*Care and maintenance*	*Voluntary repatriation*[a]	*Local settlement*	*Resettlement*	*Administrative support*	*Total*
1. Central, East and West Africa							
Benin		2 146.0		49.4		118.0	2 313.4
Central African Republic		1 705.0	52.0	1 692.0		30.0	3 479.0
Côte d'Ivoire		9 249.6	3 349.9	353.2		551.1	13 503.8
Democratic Republic of the Congo		2 949.1		1 371.0		59.6	4 379.7
Djibouti		2 021.2	278.8			315.4	2 615.4
Eritrea		689.4	359.9			47.4	1 096.7
Ethiopia		12 633.2	5 408.2	4 915.7	230.0	1 368.9	24 556.0
Ghana		1 122.4	670.0	177.8		247.1	2 217.3
Guinea	6 170.7	19 102.5	5 572.2	168.4		581.2	31 595.0
Kenya	557.0	17 209.7	4 146.7	30.3	414.8	2 525.7	24 884.2
Liberia	2 527.9	2 502.7	14 622.5	21.0		611.6	20 285.7
Mauritania		164.9	1 067.3			197.8	1 430.0
Senegal		1 231.6	323.1	898.2		580.1	3 033.0
Sierra Leone		797.2	634.5	70.3		36.2	1 538.2
Somalia		133.7	7 157.0				7 290.7
Sudan		3 709.0	810.3	4 978.2	51.8	994.2	10 543.5
Uganda		598.8		18 955.7		801.6	20 356.1
Other countries	863.9	2 392.8	8 377.6	2 594.6	22.0	573.7	14 824.6
Subtotal (1)	**10 119.5**	**80 358.8**	**52 830.0**	**36 275.8**	**718.6**	**9 639.6**	**189 942.3**
2. Great Lakes region							
Burundi	300.0	110.0	12 198.9			513.2	13 122.1
Central African Republic		655.1					655.1
Democratic Republic of the Congo	200.0	1 417.1	13 434.4	542.5		351.1	15 945.1
Kenya	509.3		1 257.7			307.1	2 074.1
Rwanda		3 814.8	31 471.4	200.0		1 051.8	36 537.9
Uganda		790.6	297.7				1 088.2
United Republic of Tanzania		21 834.1	10 121.2	174.5		855.5	32 985.3
Other countries	396.4	8 669.1	587.9	1 600.0			11 253.4
Subtotal (2)	**1 405.7**	**37 290.8**	**69 369.1**	**2 517.0**	**0.0**	**3 078.6**	**113 661.3**
3. Southern Africa							
Angola		300.0	8 446.1	171.9		952.1	9 870.0
Democratic Republic of the Congo	943.2	150.0	404.9	625.0			2 123.1
Malawi		1 000.6		160.0		28.6	1 189.2

Operations bureau/ country or area	Type of assistance						
	Emergency assistance	Care and maintenance	Voluntary repatriation[a]	Local settlement	Resettlement	Administrative support	Total
Mozambique		662.8		81.0		88.1	831.9
Zambia		1 711.9	344.9	801.4		336.7	3 194.9
Zimbabwe		722.1		115.0		38.4	875.5
Other countries		4 064.7	50.0	1 607.0		1 048.2	6 769.9
Subtotal (3)	**943.2**	**8 612.1**	**9 245.9**	**3 561.3**	**0.0**	**2 492.0**	**24 854.4**
Total Africa (1–3)	**12 468.4**	**126 261.7**	**131 444.9**	**42 354.1**	**718.6**	**15 210.2**	**328 458.0**
4. Asia and the Pacific							
Bangladesh		618.4	2 632.3			151.4	3 402.1
Cambodia			1 910.7	99.0		296.2	2 305.9
China	25.0	3 821.8	23.2	2 292.2		186.6	6 348.8
India		2 093.2	463.3			116.9	2 673.4
Indonesia		441.9				88.8	530.7
Japan		2 085.4		98.6		274.6	2 458.6
Lao People's Democratic Republic			1 747.1			103.4	1 850.5
Malaysia		581.5				81.1	662.6
Myanmar			6 553.0			482.1	7 035.1
Nepal		4 776.0		491.0		356.7	5 623.6
Philippines		605.5				102.8	708.3
Sri Lanka		193.2	6 662.7			383.8	7 239.8
Thailand		3 225.2	3 523.0		141.5	432.7	7 322.4
Viet Nam	25.0		1 612.2			195.8	1 833.0
Other countries in Asia		247.4					247.4
Australia and Papua New Guinea		713.2		140.0		199.8	1 053.0
Subtotal (4)	**50.0**	**19 402.8**	**25 127.6**	**3 120.8**	**141.5**	**3 452.6**	**51 295.2**
5. Europe							
Armenia		71.5		3 329.1		218.1	3 618.7
Austria		554.7		1 206.1		101.3	1 862.0
Azerbaijan		39.0		8 829.3		343.1	9 211.3
Cyprus		446.1				96.7	542.7
France				2 284.7		86.9	2 371.5
Georgia		8 839.4				534.2	9 373.6
Germany				2 168.4	50.0	208.8	2 427.1
Greece				1 487.9		58.5	1 546.5
Hungary		1 078.4				29.3	1 107.7
Italy		122.6		1 679.1		315.8	2 117.5
Russian Federation	53.7	11 699.2	101.4	55.5		783.9	12 693.7
Spain				1 044.0		67.8	1 111.8
Turkey		4 036.1		110.3	388.6	424.2	4 959.2

Operations bureau/ country or area	Type of assistance						
	Emergency assistance	Care and maintenance	Voluntary repatriation[a]	Local settlement	Resettlement	Administrative support	Total
United Kingdom				1 720.5		81.0	1 801.5
CIS countries		4 055.0		1 743.5		359.7	6 158.2
Northern and Baltic countries		877.6		1 072.3		131.9	2 081.8
Western countries		395.7		2 735.0		168.2	3 298.9
Other countries		3 160.4		3 051.4		155.2	6 367.0
Subtotal (5)	**53.7**	**35 375.6**	**101.4**	**32 517.1**	**438.6**	**4 164.5**	**72 650.8**
6. Former Yugoslavia							
Albania	5 830.0	840.7				39.7	6 710.4
Austria		125.6					125.6
Belgium		40.3					40.3
Bosnia and Herzegovina	76.0	16 137.7	60 628.3	3 632.0		2 693.2	83 167.3
Croatia		18 481.4			25.0	1 032.6	19 539.0
Germany		119.4					119.4
Slovenia		1 553.6		39.7		118.8	1 712.0
Sweden		84.9					84.9
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	75.1	1 052.6				37.9	1 165.6
Yugoslavia, Federal Republic of	2 202.6	4 930.3		45 881.3	347.7	892.1	54 254.0
Subtotal (6)	**8 183.6**	**43 366.5**	**60 628.3**	**49 553.0**	**372.7**	**4 814.3**	**166 918.5**
Total Europe (5–6)	**8 237.3**	**78 742.1**	**60 729.7**	**82 070.1**	**811.3**	**8 978.9**	**239 569.4**
7. The Americas							
Canada				869.1		54.4	923.4
Guatemala			4 787.6	138.0		532.4	5 458.0
Mexico		749.6	1 062.1	7 572.4		591.8	9 975.8
United States of America				3 642.1		364.5	4 006.6
Central American countries		21.7	103.0	2 187.6		202.8	2 515.0
Northern South American countries		1 564.3	8.7	555.9		275.6	2 404.5
Southern South American countries		1 717.8	298.4	2 745.6		371.5	5 133.2
Subtotal (7)	**0.0**	**4 053.3**	**6 259.7**	**17 710.6**	**0.0**	**2 392.9**	**30 416.5**
8. Central and South-West Asia North Africa and the Middle East							
Afghanistan			5 784.1			202.9	5 987.0
Algeria		3 639.4	2 217.4			37.5	5 894.3
Central Asian Republics		4 920.6	4 456.2	123.8		657.6	10 158.2
Egypt		3 628.4		90.3	82.6	378.9	4 180.1
Iran (Islamic Republic of)		2 136.9	3 045.0	9 499.3		521.1	15 202.3
Iraq		3 247.6	786.0		160.0	378.5	4 572.1

Operations bureau/ country or area	Type of assistance: Emergency assistance	Care and maintenance	Voluntary repatriation[a]	Local settlement	Resettlement	Administrative support	Total
Pakistan		11 848.6	2 669.8			922.1	15 440.6
Yemen		2 494.7	953.5			114.8	3 563.1
Other countries in North Africa		1 857.4	925.8			88.4	2 871.6
Other countries in Western Asia		8 039.7	13.5		379.9	501.3	8 934.4
Subtotal (8)	**0.0**	**41 813.2**	**20 851.3**	**9 713.4**	**622.5**	**3 803.0**	**76 803.5**
9. Other programmes and headquarters							
Global and regional projects	6 366.1	35 588.0	8 940.8	12 591.9	2 235.8	48 246.0	113 968.5
Total (1–9)	**27 121.8**	**305 861.1**	**253 353.9**	**167 560.9**	**4 529.7**	**82 083.6**	**840 511.1**
of which:							
General Programmes	6 601.3	206 395.3	15 075.3	83 796.0	2 580.7	33 923.1	348 371.7
Special Programmes	20 520.5	99 465.8	238 278.6	83 764.9	1 949.0	48 160.5[b]	492 139.4
United Nations regular budget						23 304.5	23 304.5

[a] Including assistance to returnees in countries of origin.

[b] Including expenditure for the Fund for International Field Staff Housing and basic amenities.

Table 2
Contributions to UNHCR operations — situation at 31 March 1999
(In United States dollars)

1998				*1999*		
General Programmes	*Special Programmes*	*Total 1998*	*Donor*	*Total 1999*	*General Programmes*	*Special Programmes*
			A. *Governments*			
50 000		50 000	Algeria	50 000	50 000	
	88 215	88 215	Armenia			
			Argentina			
9 060 403	506 128	9 566 531	Australia	8 384 333	8 384 333	
400 976	705 000	1 105 976	Austria	844 083	423 944	420 139
2 209 254	2 164 236	4 373 490	Belgium	2 886 449	1 793 203	1 093 246
			Benin	1 500	1 500	
10 000		10 000	Brunei Darussalam	0		
8 862 257	3 411 879	12 274 136	Canada	1 266 667	266 667	1 000 000
20 000		20 000	Chile	20 000	20 000	
250 000		250 000	China	264 900	250 000	14 900
20 674		20 674	Colombia	19 000	19 000	
28 480		28 480	Costa Rica	0		
	4 000	4 000	Cyprus	0		
17 306 415	24 259 611	41 566 026	Denmark	15 463 377	15 339 776	123 601
1 000		1 000	Djibouti	0		
5 896		5 896	Egypt	0		
7 524 593	4 660 107	12 184 700	Finland	24 491		24 491
4 243 117	4 575 681	8 818 798	France	0		
5 173 790	13 739 968	18 913 758	Germany	6 418 986	400 000	6 018 986
5 000		5 000	Ghana	5 000	5 000	
300 000	85 083	385 083	Greece	300 000	300 000	
9 978		9 978	Guatemala	0		
10 000		10 000	Holy See	0		
25 000		25 000	Hungary	30 000	30 000	
62 972		62 972	Iceland	0		
4 000		4 000	Indonesia	0		
1 896 025	849 212	2 745 237	Ireland	208 866	208 866	
90 000		90 000	Israel	45 000	45 000	
6 779 661	1 938 777	8 718 438	Italy	705 646		705 646
29 207 840	78 577 578	107 785 418	Japan	15 195 606		15 195 606
			Kuwait	195 651	195 651	
46 358	6 579	52 937	Liechtenstein	34 722	34 722	
147 055	867 226	1 014 281	Luxembourg	0		
20 000		20 000	Malaysia	20 000	20 000	
1 802		1 802	Malta	0		

1998				1999		
General Programmes	*Special Programmes*	*Total 1998*	*Donor*	*Total 1999*	*General Programmes*	*Special Programmes*
63 714	35 822	99 536	Mexico	0		
			Monaco	8 894	8 894	
10 000		10 000	Myanmar	–		
1 000		1 000	Namibia	0		
24 214 692	16 244 382	40 459 074	Netherlands	27 087 539	25 157 390	1 930 149
1 054 552	59 707	1 114 259	New Zealand	721 980	721 980	
	280 000	280 000	Nigeria	0		
22 693 044	13 125 771	35 818 815	Norway	23 352 004	22 427 441	924 563
4 000		4 000	Oman	4 000	4 000	
			Panama	1 000	1 000	
607	607	1 214	Philippines	–		
	20 000	20 000	Poland	–		
225 000		225 000	Portugal	225 000	225 000	
1 000 000		1 000 000	Republic of Korea	–		
122 227		122 227	Saudi Arabia	–		
600 000	400 000	1 000 000	South Africa	–		
2 136 167	1 025 134	3 161 301	Spain	–		
5 390		5 390	Sri Lanka	5 547	5 547	
32 753 165	18 867 020	51 620 185	Sweden	13 085 593		13 085 593
8 783 784	9 823 040	18 606 824	Switzerland	9 946 398	9 219 858	726 540
9 898		9 898	Thailand	15 000	15 000	
4 651		4 651	Tunisia	4 643	4 643	
150 000		150 000	Turkey	150 000	150 000	
54 000		54 000	United Arab Emirates	–		
21 134 000	7 650 923	28 784 923	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland			
5 025		5 025	United Republic of Tanzania	–		
113 426 045	141 026 587	254 452 632	United States of America	117 956 278	84 726 278	33 230 000
1 224		1 224	Venezuela			
322 224 731	**344 998 273**	**667 223 004**	**Total (Governments)**	**244 948 153**	**170 454 693**	**74 493 460**
561 575	90 071 195	90 632 770	B. *European Commission*	2 533 006	7 835	2 525 171
561 575	**90 071 195**	**90 632 770**	**Total**	**2 533 006**	**7 835**	**2 525 171**
	2 465	2 465	C. *United Nations system*			
	2 465	**2 465**	**Total**			
4 705 261	6 512 057	11 217 318	D. *NGOs and other donors*	1 179 527	1 721	1 177 806
4 705 261	**6 512 057**	**11 217 318**	**Total**	**1 179 527**	**1 721**	**1 177 806**
327 491 567	**441 583 990**	**769 075 557**	**Grand total**	**248 660 686**	**170 464 249**	**78 196 437**

Table 3
Indicative numbers of refugees and others of concern to UNHCR, end-1998

Region and country/ territory of asylum/residence	*Refugees*	*Asylum-seekers*	*Returned refugees*	*Others of concern*			*Total population of concern*
				IDPs	*Returned IDPs*	*Various*	
Burundi	25 100	250	110 800	520 000	–	10 600	666 750
Djibouti	23 600	290	–	–	–	–	23 890
Eritrea	2 500	–	–	–	–	–	2 500
Ethiopia	262 000	10	19 500	–	–	–	281 510
Kenya	236 900	6 400	10	–	–	–	243 310
Malawi	440	570	–	–	–	–	1 010
Mozambique	50	720	70	–	–	–	840
Rwanda	33 400	810	229 500	625 000	1 100	–	889 810
Somalia	340	–	60 100	–	–	50 000	110 440
Uganda	204 500	130	1 300	–	–	–	205 930
United Republic of Tanzania	543 900	14 100	–	–	–	–	558 000
Zambia	168 600	1 200	–	–	–	–	169 800
Zimbabwe	820	170	–	–	–	–	990
Eastern Africa total	**1 502 150**	**24 650**	**421 280**	**1 145 000**	**1 100**	**60 600**	**3 154 780**
Angola	10 600	70	75 500	–	–	–	86 170
Cameroon	47 700	4 300	–	–	–	–	52 000
Central African Republic	43 000	5 800	–	–	–	–	48 800
Chad	8 800	60	500	–	–	–	9 360
Congo	6 500	260	16 800	–	–	–	23 560
Democratic Republic of the Congo	240 300	120	74 700	–	–	–	315 120
Gabon	1 100	570	–	–	–	–	1 670
Middle Africa total	**358 000**	**11 180**	**167 500**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**536 680**
Algeria	165 200	60	–	–	–	70	165 330
Egypt	6 300	1 000	–	–	–	–	7 300
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	10 600	220	–	–	–	–	10 820
Morocco	330	70	–	–	–	–	400
Sudan	391 500	80	–	–	–	–	391 580
Tunisia	530	30	–	–	–	–	560
Northern Africa total	**574 460**	**1 460**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**70**	**575 990**
Botswana	2 100	–	–	–	–	–	2 100
Namibia	3 500	–	–	–	–	–	3 500

Region and country/ territory of asylum/residence	Refugees	Asylum-seekers	Returned refugees	Others of concern			Total population of concern
				IDPs	Returned IDPs	Various	
South Africa	8 400	20 200	70	–	–	–	28 670
Swaziland	590	30	–	–	–	–	620
Southern Africa total	**14 590**	**20 230**	**70**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**34 890**
Benin	2 900	1 200	–	–	–	–	4 100
Burkina Faso	560	280	–	–	–	–	840
Côte d'Ivoire	119 900	460	–	–	–	–	120 360
Gambia	10 300	–	–	–	–	–	10 300
Ghana	14 900	110	–	–	–	–	15 010
Guinea	413 700	–	–	–	–	–	413 700
Guinea-Bissau	6 600	–	–	195 600	–	–	202 200
Liberia	103 100	20	250 500	–	–	–	353 620
Mali	11 600	550	41 900	–	–	–	54 050
Mauritania	23 100	–	12 200	–	–	–	35 300
Niger	3 700	90	3 300	–	–	–	7 090
Nigeria	7 900	–	–	–	–	–	7 900
Senegal	60 800	1 000	–	–	–	–	61 800
Sierra Leone	9 900	–	196 000	670 000	–	–	875 900
Togo	11 800	330	10 100	–	–	–	22 230
Western Africa total	**800 760**	**4 040**	**514 000**	**865 600**	**–**	**–**	**2 184 400**
Africa total	**3 249 960**	**61 560**	**1 102 850**	**2 010 600**	**1 100**	**60 670**	**6 486 740**
China	292 300	–	–	–	–	–	292 300
Hong Kong[a]	1 000	20	–	–	–	–	1 020
Japan[b]	1 900	120	–	–	–	–	2 020
Republic of Korea	–	20	–	–	–	–	20
Eastern Asia total	**295 200**	**160**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**295 360**
Afghanistan	–	–	193 000	315 800	27 900	–	536 700
Bangladesh	22 300	20	30 000	–	–	–	52 320
India	185 500	10	–	–	–	–	185 510
Islamic Republic of Iran	1 931 300	–	–	–	–	–	1 931 300
Kazakhstan	4 200	430	25 500	–	–	–	30 130
Kyrgyzstan	14 600	260	–	–	–	–	14 860
Nepal	126 100	50	–	–	–	–	126 150
Pakistan	1 202 500	170	–	–	–	–	1 202 670

Region and country/ territory of asylum/residence	Refugees	Asylum-seekers	Returned refugees	Others of concern			Total population of concern
				IDPs	Returned IDPs	Various	
Sri Lanka	30	20	110	603 000	114 600	–	717 760
Tajikistan	3 600	1 800	14 000	–	–	–	19 400
Turkmenistan	14 600	200	–	–	–	20	14 820
Uzbekistan	1 100	2 700	20	–	–	–	3 820
South-central Asia total	**3 505 830**	**5 660**	**262 630**	**918 800**	**142 500**	**20**	**4 835 440**
Cambodia	20	210	10 500	–	37 900	–	48 630
Indonesia	50	60	–	–	–	–	110
Lao People's Democratic Republic	–	–	540	–	–	–	540
Malaysia	50 600	570	–	–	–	–	51 170
Myanmar	–	–	10 200	–	–	–	10 200
Philippines	310	50	–	–	–	–	360
Singapore	10	10	–	–	–	–	20
Thailand	138 300	830	–	–	–	1 200	140 330
Viet Nam	15 000	–	4 700	–	–	–	19 700
South-eastern Asia total	**204 290**	**1 730**	**25 940**	**–**	**37 900**	**1 200**	**271 060**
Armenia	310 000	–	–	–	–	–	310 000
Azerbaijan	221 600	290	–	576 300	–	–	798 190
Cyprus	–	–	–	265 000	–	–	265 000
Georgia	20	–	–	277 000	–	–	277 020
Iraq	104 100	1 600	22 500	–	–	–	128 200
Jordan	780	4 100	–	–	–	–	4 880
Kuwait	4 200	160	–	–	–	138 000	142 360
Lebanon	3 700	2 200	–	–	–	–	5 900
Saudi Arabia	5 500	50	–	–	–	–	5 550
Syrian Arab Republic	20 800	5 000	–	–	–	–	25 800
Turkey	2 500	3 600	1 800	–	–	–	7 900
United Arab Emirates	530	150	–	–	–	–	680
Yemen	62 700	70	–	–	–	28 500	91 270
Western Asia total	**736 430**	**17 220**	**24 300**	**1 118 300**	**–**	**166 500**	**2 062 750**
Asia total	**4 741 750**	**24 770**	**312 870**	**2 037 100**	**180 400**	**167 720**	**7 464 610**
Belarus	80	15 900	–	–	–	160 000	175 980
Bulgaria	240	2 400	–	–	–	–	2 640
Czech Republic	1 800	1 900	–	–	–	3 700	7 400

Region and country/ territory of asylum/residence	Refugees	Asylum-seekers	Returned refugees	Others of concern			Total population of concern
				IDPs	Returned IDPs	Various	
Hungary[b]	5 100	2 600	–	–	–	–	7 700
Poland[b]	880	1 300	–	–	–	–	2 180
Republic of Moldova	–	120	–	1 300	–	–	1 420
Romania	990	470	–	–	–	–	1 460
Russian Federation	128 600	11 300	50	171 900	26 000	827 600	1 165 450
Slovakia	420	270	–	–	–	–	690
Ukraine	6 100	210	–	–	–	105 700	112 010
Eastern Europe total	**144 210**	**36 470**	**50**	**173 200**	**26 000**	**1 097 000**	**1 476 930**
Denmark[b]	70 400	–	–	–	–	–	70 400
Finland[b]	12 000	1 400	–	–	–	–	13 400
Iceland[b]	290	–	–	–	–	–	290
Ireland[b,c]	530	8 400	–	–	–	–	8 930
Latvia	–	20	–	–	–	–	20
Lithuania	30	90	–	–	–	–	120
Norway[b]	44 800	–	–	–	–	–	44 800
Sweden[b]	178 900	–	–	–	–	–	178 900
United Kingdom[b,c]	111 700	81 000	–	–	–	–	192 700
Northern Europe total	**418 650**	**90 210**	–	–	–	–	**509 560**
Albania	22 300	–	–	–	–	–	22 300
Bosnia and Herzegovina	40 000	–	221 800	836 400	87 900	–	1 186 100
Croatia	29 000	–	29 500	71 700	42 700	320	173 220
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	1 700	–	–	–	–	–	1 700
Greece	5 900	–	–	–	–	–	5 900
Italy	73 400	–	–	–	–	–	73 400
Malta	340	–	–	–	–	–	340
Portugal[b]	240	–	–	–	–	–	240
Slovenia	3 500	330	–	–	–	–	3 830
Spain[b]	5 900	1 600	–	–	–	–	7 500
Yugoslavia	502 000	6 000	–	225 000	110 000	–	843 000
Southern Europe total	**684 280**	**7 930**	**251 300**	**1 133 100**	**240 600**	**320**	**2 317 530**
Austria[b]	80 300	5 500	–	–	–	–	85 800
Belgium	36 100	23 100	–	–	–	–	59 200
France	147 300	–	–	–	–	–	147 300

Region and country/ territory of asylum/residence	Refugees	Asylum-seekers	Returned refugees	Others of concern			Total population of concern
				IDPs	Returned IDPs	Various	
Germany[d]	939 200	36 000	–	–	–	–	975 200
Luxembourg	700	–	–	–	–	–	700
Netherlands[b]	131 800	–	–	–	–	–	131 800
Switzerland	82 000	44 700	–	–	–	–	126 700
Western Europe total	**1 417 400**	**109 300**	–	–	–	–	**1 526 700**
Europe total	**2 664 540**	**244 610**	**251 350**	**1 306 300**	**266 600**	**1 097 320**	**5 830 720**
Bahamas	80	20	–	–	–	–	100
Cuba	1 100	–	–	–	–	–	1 100
Dominican Republic	610	–	–	–	–	–	610
Jamaica	40	10	–	–	–	–	50
Caribbean total	**1 830**	**30**	–	–	–	–	**1 860**
Belize	3 400	–	–	–	–	20 000	23 400
Costa Rica	23 000	–	–	–	–	–	23 000
El Salvador	30	–	130	–	–	–	160
Guatemala	820	–	7 500	–	–	–	8 320
Honduras	10	–	–	–	–	–	10
Mexico	28 300	–	–	–	–	–	28 300
Nicaragua	470	–	–	–	–	–	470
Panama	1 200	60	–	150	–	–	1 410
Central America total	**57 230**	**60**	**7 630**	**150**	–	**20 000**	**85 070**
Argentina	10 900	–	–	–	–	–	10 900
Bolivia	350	20	–	–	–	–	370
Brazil	2 300	150	–	–	–	–	2 450
Chile	310	40	–	–	–	–	350
Colombia	230	–	–	–	–	–	230
Ecuador	250	40	–	–	–	–	290
Paraguay	30	–	–	–	–	–	30
Peru	430	10	–	–	–	–	440
Uruguay	160	–	–	–	–	–	160
Venezuela	160	–	–	–	–	–	160
South America total	**15 120**	**260**	–	–	–	–	**15 380**
Latin America and Caribbean total	**74 180**	**350**	**7 630**	**150**	–	**20 000**	**102 310**

Region and country/ territory of asylum/residence	Refugees	Asylum-seekers	Returned refugees	Others of concern			Total population of concern
				IDPs	Returned IDPs	Various	
Canada[a]	114 300	23 300	–	–	–	–	137 600
United States[a][c]	522 500	522 900	–	–	–	–	1 045 400
Northern America total	**636 800**	**546 200**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**1 183 000**
Australia[a]	61 800	2 300	–	–	–	–	64 100
New Zealand[a]	4 100	2 900	–	–	–	–	7 000
Australia-New Zealand total	**65 900**	**5 200**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**71 100**
Papua New Guinea	8 200	–	–	–	–	–	8 200
Solomon Islands	210	–	–	–	–	–	210
Melanesia total	**8 410**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**8 410**
Oceania total	**74 310**	**5 200**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**79 510**
Grand total	**11 441 540**	**882 690**	**1 674 700**	**5 354 150**	**448 100**	**1 345 710**	**21 146 890**

Source: Governments, UNHCR.

Notes

Statistics are provisional and subject to change. Figures printed in italics refer to end of 1997.

All numbers are rounded to the nearest 10 (below 1,000) or 100 (1,000 and above).

A dash ("–") indicates that the value is zero, rounded to zero, not available or not applicable.

Refugees: persons recognized as refugees under the 1951 United Nations Convention, the 1969 OAU Convention, in accordance with the UNHCR Status, persons granted a humanitarian status and those granted temporary protection.

Asylum-seekers: persons whose application for refugee status is pending in the asylum procedure or who are otherwise registered as asylum-seekers.

Returned refugees: refugees who have returned to their place or origin and who remain of concern to UNHCR for a maximum period of two years.

Others of concern: certain specific group of persons not coming within the ordinary mandate of UNHCR.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs): persons who are displaced within their country and to whom UNHCR extends protection and/or assistance in pursuance to a special request by a competent organ of the United Nations.

Returned IDPs: IDPs of concern to UNHCR who have returned to their place of origin and who remain of concern to UNHCR for a maximum period of two years.

[a] On 1 July 1997, Hong Kong became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China.

[b] Refugee population estimated by UNHCR, based on the arrival of refugees and/or recognition of asylum-seekers over the past 10 years.

[c] Number of asylum-seekers (persons) estimated by UNHCR, based on the number of pending cases or applications.

[d] According to the German Central Aliens' register, there are an estimated 285,000 asylum-seekers in Germany.

[e] Refugee population estimated by UNHCR, based on the arrival of refugees and/or recognition of asylum-seekers over the past 5 years.